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The Teaching of HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH

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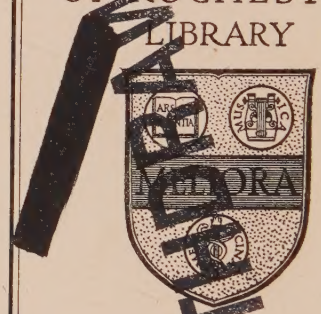

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The Teaching of

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH

Longmans' Education Series

Edited by

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A Composition Exhibit at the Close of a Term

High school pupils during a free period and mothers of some pupils looking over the composition folders containing the original writing of the term.

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Longmans' Education Series

The Teaching of
HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH

By
VIRGINIA J. CRAIG, PH.D.
Head of the English Department in the Southwest Missouri State Teachers College

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CRAIG
THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH

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To the Memory of
My Father
SILAS L. CRAIG

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

YEARS of successful preparation of teachers, and penetrating study of the fascinating though difficult problems of teaching English in the high school have earned for the author of this book the right to prepare a systematic text on the subject of teaching English.

Few will read the present volume without being impressed with its sincerity, its vigor, its competence, and the winsome appeal it holds for students preparing to teach in the high school.

Three fundamental questions may well be asked by any professor engaged upon the selection of a basic text for any important course.

First: Does this text contain those parts of the truth which it is most important for my students to consider? A question subsidiary to this main one might be: Is the text relatively free from considerations of the trivial, elaborations of the obvious, and overemphasis of personal points of view or prejudices?

Second: Is this text teachable? Some aspects of this main question are: Is the text organized to facilitate an effective study of it; is it of reasonable length; is its reading or comprehension difficulty at the level of the reading ability of my students; is it itself a sample of good English composition?

Third: Is this book a strong, powerful text or is it a weakling? Such questions as the following are subsidiary: (1) Is it the hurried work of a tired brain or is it the slowly accumulated product of vigorous thought? (2) Will it interest the student —has it the breath of living teaching in it or is it cold and labored composition? (3) Will it help to lead the student on to self-realization in the high profession of teaching or is it just another methods book?

With such questions as the above in mind, the reader can appraise the value of the book for himself.

F. B. KNIGHT.

PREFACE

THE MORE extensive our experience as teachers of English, the more convinced we become that our work is highly problematical. The aim of this book is to give in a practical way conclusions derived from considerable experience and observation. Since teaching is an art as well as a science, progress in the art of teaching as in every other fine art must be dependent upon communication of results. Many leading authorities have deplored the fact that the gains of teaching go to waste for lack of record. This loss seems to be particularly notable in the teaching of English. By the time English teachers have learned their business, they are usually dead and have no opportunity to apply their knowledge except in another world. If only the young teacher could begin where his predecessor left off and thus avoid mistakes previously made, the undreamed-of potentialities of high school education might be realized.

Since this book utilizes specific experience, the plans and directions are specific. Vagueness would be in many ways a safer policy than definiteness, but it would be less serviceable to beginning teachers. The space in the various parts of the book is proportioned to the difficulties encountered in grappling with actual problems. On this basis written and oral composition are given full treatment. Class room procedures are considered at great length because these

largely determine whether a teacher stands or falls, is a success or a failure.

The book is intended as a text for methods courses in teachers' colleges. Investigators agree that a course in the special methods of English is more immediately contributory to efficient teaching of the subject than any other kind of education course. In this text the teachers' college class for whom the book is intended is called the Methods class. Illustrative material in the text is provided as a model for original plans to be made by students in the Methods course. A larger purpose of the text is to aid all beginning English teachers. To remove some briars from their steep and thorny path would be a consummation devoutly to be wished.

For illustrations of class rooms and of work done by pupils I am indebted as follows to the kind co-operation of certain instructors: to Miss Ida Ausherman, Head of the English Department, High School, Springfield, Missouri, for the pictures both of the conversation class and of the poetry books; to Mr. Scott Ware, to Miss Lochie Sperry, to Miss Aldine Patterson (members of the English Department, High School, Springfield, Missouri), respectively, for the pictures of the journalism class, the magazines made by juniors, and the oral composition class; to Miss Matie Bruffey, Supervisor of High School English Teaching, State Teachers' College, Springfield, Missouri, for the picture of the composition exhibit.

I am under extreme obligation to Professor Frederic B. Knight for most helpful criticisms and suggestions of every possible kind.

VIRGINIA J. CRAIG

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The Teaching of HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH

CHAPTER I

THE COURSE OF STUDY

THE PLACE OF ENGLISH IN THE CURRICULUM

In preparing for the teaching of high school English, we are beginning a work of intense interest and broad scope. The problems of the English course are inherent in the adaptation of a rich content to the rapid changes of the adolescent years.

1. **English teaching as a vocation.** — Young men and women who are preparing to teach high school English are entering a vocation that has an expanding future. This expansion is connected both with the phenomenally rapid multiplication of high schools and with the increasing importance attached to English as a subject. The American people support the high school program because they desire that their children shall be prepared to take "white collar" jobs. Thus an exceptionally powerful motive, parental devotion, insures increasingly liberal provision for high schools. In every type of high school, the technical no less than the cultural, the subject of English has unique recognition. In the lower years of the junior high school it is frequently allowed two periods daily. Usually it is the only subject absolutely required in the ninth, the tenth, and the

eleventh grades. If elective in the twelfth grade, it is invariably elected by large numbers. It is studied continuously even to the day of graduation by the majority of high school students.[1] The place of other subjects is often attacked; that of English is apparently secure beyond question. In fact, the value of English is enhanced by numerous changes occurring in modern life. The sharper economic competition of the future makes mastery of language for commercial purposes of ever greater moment. The leisure which multitudes enjoy as a result of mass production and machinery can be used wisely only through diffused knowledge of the fine arts, and especially of the finest and most available art, literature.[2] These new social needs will mean enlarged opportunities for English teachers.

In addition to great future possibilities English teaching has some constant advantages that can be fully known only to those who engage in the work. It is an inestimable privilege to present a content that is as varied as human experience and that satisfies the strongest cravings of young people.[3] The ambitious high school student yearns for the personal influence that results from the power to talk well. Working under a good teacher, he rejoices in the conscious-

[1] As to the opinion of educators on the importance of four years of English, see Max J. Herzberg, "Four Years of English in Secondary Schools," *English Journal,* XI, 236–238.

[2] Literature, language, and the fine arts lead all topics in frequency of mention in the *Literary Digest,* as shown by Paul L. Palmer: see Franklin Bobbitt, *Curriculum Investigations* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1926), VI.

[3] On student preference for English over other subjects see Walter F. Downey, "Mathematical Interests of High School Pupils," used by Willis L. Uhl, *Principles of Secondary Education* (New York: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1925), VII, 271–272. See also Robert H. Proctor, "How High School Seniors Regard English," *English Journal,* XI, 425–428.

ness that he is daily becoming more articulate. He attaches high value to a subject that flashes before him the beauty of a play or a poem so that he too feels "like some watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken." The art that he thus sees revealed is often a rainbow of promise which he resolves to follow and of which the quest will not end in disillusionment or disappointment. Is not the English teacher, who is the revealer of art, justified in feeling enthusiasm and pride ?

Another advantage of the subject is that it affords the pleasure of grappling with new problems. English courses are still in a chaotic condition. It is true that many recent books on English teaching as well as the very valuable periodical, the *English Journal,* have disseminated important basic principles and have contributed to steady improvement. But only a beginning has been made toward the formulation of a course. A thousand questions confront every versatile, open-minded teacher. Is this poem too difficult for the ninth grade ? Is this story the most stimulating that can be found for the tenth grade ? Is there a better method of testing students that would disclose weaknesses in essentials and at the same time point to a remedy ? Every inventive and resourceful teacher can be a pioneer and can aid in determining materials and methods that will result in better teaching for the next generation. English teaching is fascinating because it both challenges and utilizes all one's powers and because it affords boundless opportunities for personal achievement and originality.

2. **Adaptation of the course.** — An English course can be satisfactory and successful only if it is properly related

to the changes and the interests of the adolescent period. The adolescent period is the time when intellectual curiosity is most intense, when growth of thought and feeling is most rapid, when each day has a larger outlook than the day before. The constant mental expansion during the years from twelve to eighteen makes it imperative that selection of subject matter at every point be most judicious. Both the literature taught and the training in speech and in writing must be psychologically adapted to any given stage. There will be far greater eagerness in writing speeches if the moment can be seized when the student feels the first impulse toward leadership and the first stirring of civic ambition. Adaptation is urgent because possible material covers immense range and variety. No one can measure the irreparable calamity if the English course misses fire. The right literature given at the right time can enable boys and girls to experience vicariously almost every passion, joy, and grief. Unfortunately, the assignment of books not emotionally suited to a particular year may rob young people of the excitement and delight of which literature is the source. For instance, *The Vicar of Wakefield* can be read with general comprehension by many high school freshmen, but psychologically it can mean much more to juniors or seniors, who are more likely to feel the pathetic anxieties of the father and husband.

I. THE DUAL CHARACTER OF ENGLISH TEACHING

The problems of the English course are complicated by the dual purpose of English study, liberal culture through a high type of enjoyment and mastery of the vernacular for self-expression and for practical use. While these two objectives

are generally recognized, the balance between them is not always duly preserved. There is a crying need for more attention to practical English. (oral & written composition)

3. **Aims.** — As it is imperative that the English course be adapted to each stage of adolescent development, it must also be steadily related to the two dominant aims of the subject. One of these aims is mainly æsthetic; the other is mainly practical. The chief aim of contact with literature is a deep and splendid type of pleasure. We may safely recognize also such indirect, subordinate, and incidental purposes as cultivation of the reading habit and acquisition of general information, of vocabulary, and of skill in rapid and intelligent reading. We shall, however, find ourselves on slippery and dangerous ground if we are led into acceptance of such goals as moral training or Americanization. The controlling aim in teaching literature is artistic enjoyment. The practical aim of English study is the mastery of expression, both oral and written. The fact that in the speaking and writing of our strongest students there is a conscious literary effort does not vitiate the substantial truth of the statement that the purpose of expression is mainly practical. Oral composition and written composition are to be viewed as two specific forms of practical English study. The enlargement of personality through literature and the practical values of oral composition and written composition are suggested by Bacon's statement that reading makes the full man, conversation the ready man, and writing the exact man.

4. **Preserving a balance.** — In the organization of the course the teaching time should be divided nearly evenly

between literature and practical English.[4] There is no objection to the traditional terms, "literature" and "composition," if only "composition" is understood to mean countless varieties of practical training. The term, "composition," includes many things besides original writing, the pupil's attempt to give an effective written account of his experiences, ideas, opinions, and feelings. In addition to original writing, the term, "composition," includes oral composition, studies in organization and outlining, exercises to secure syntactical correctness, habit-forming exercises in spelling and punctuation, and attention to vocabulary. Though English teachers would generally assent to the theory that these various types of work combined ought to have as much teaching time as literature, class room practice at the present time does not live up to the theory. There is reason to fear that the study of literature has largely crowded out not only written composition but also the study of vocabulary and of sentence structure.[5] In some small high schools literary biography, the history of literature, and literature are given three or four times as many class periods as are all phases of practical English. The fundamental cause for wrong proportions is that practical English makes a very heavy demand on the energy, skill, and resources of the teacher. The teacher of practical English who would make

[4] This question was answered in written form by eighty-four Kansas City teachers of high school English: In the ninth, the tenth, and the eleventh grades, which one of these three plans is best: (1) Nearly equal teaching time for practical English and for literature; (2) Much more time for literature than for practical English; (3) Much less time for literature than for practical English? Plan 1 was selected by sixty-nine teachers, plan 2 by six teachers, and plan 3 by nine teachers.

[5] Cf. George P. Wilson, "What is Wrong with High School English?" *English Journal*, XI, 355–360.

the class period bright and lively cannot lean heavily on a composition textbook; he must originate striking concrete illustrations and must be able to use material gathered from observing the life of the students.

Even though the temptation to neglect practical needs may be enticing, English teachers who are far-sighted will resist it. In the first place, many of the apparent difficulties connected with presentation of subject matter vanish after conscientious effort and intelligently interpreted experience. In the second place, a well-balanced course reaches and interests all sorts of temperaments. Some very promising students recognize the vocational value of training for correctness and accord the highest respect to a course that is comprehensive and symmetrical. They can see that while Shakespeare is a source of joy, correct spelling and a ready discriminating vocabulary are sure to mean a bigger monthly check for the stenographer. The interest that they have in the matter of correctness is demonstrated in some curious ways. In many schools that buy and sell second-hand books there are just two books that are rarely sold back. One of these is a book on cooking and the other is a book on usage in language. In other words, even impecunious students consider that an aid in practical English has worth not to be measured in cash. In the third place, the right kind of course brings rewards to teachers. Teachers who secure gratifying results in practical English are in the end appreciated more highly than those who are successful only in the teaching of literature. Both the high school graduates who take clerical jobs and those who go to college find that thoroughness in essentials stands them in good

stead. Consequently, recognition comes to those who teach usage in speech and writing not less admirably than they teach literature. This recognition often means for teachers both salary increase and an allowance of fewer classes daily.

II. THE QUESTION OF DUAL ENGLISH COURSES

Now that we have considered the twofold purpose of English study, we come to an important problem dealing with the organization of the work. Should literature and practical English be taught together in the same course? Or should they be separate courses? Certain considerations relative to this problem deserve comment. Let us review the arguments that may be offered for separate courses and then those that may be offered for combined courses.

5. **The chief arguments.** — Some leading educators argue that separate so-called composition courses mean more effective instruction in form, technique, and rhetoric. This argument undoubtedly has some weight. At the same time one cannot keep from wondering whether a somewhat artificial device can be truly far-reaching in results. In one or two large cities where the plan of separation is practiced, it is noticeable that extremely popular and influential teachers frequently secure for themselves a larger number of literature courses and a smaller number of practical English courses. Hence, the actual consequence is that unskilled teachers handle the more difficult types of work. Again, since many small high schools do not have teachers thoroughly trained in oral and written composition, the imposed requirement of distinct composition courses fails to remedy the fundamental defects. A second argument offered by those who advocate the separation of composition from literature study has a large degree of cogency. The separation

makes it easier to retard inaccurate students. It is an eminently sound policy to require students to repeat a composition course because their form or spelling or punctuation is bad. If the courses combine literature and composition, deficiencies in practical English often force students to repeat the study of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* or *The Idylls of the King*. Such repetition is worse than wasteful; it is deadening.

On the other hand, there are two strong arguments against separate courses. In teaching composition, especially in teaching written exposition and argument, we need intimate contact with literary models.[6] Even composition texts make illustrative use of literary extracts. The immense value of rhetoric developed inductively is surely patent enough. One who studies a logical essay such as Palmer's *Self-Cultivation in English* learns much about organizing and about writing. One who reads a short, bright humorous essay, such as Lamb's *Mackery End,* may discover hitherto unobserved possibilities for getting entertaining ideas from one's family connections and experience. In fact, the educators who advocate separate literature and composition courses usually hasten to assure teachers that they are not opposed to the use of literary models as a part of the composition course. Sometimes, however, when such models have been introduced into the so-called composition courses, they have infringed far on the time which has been

[6] This question was answered in written form by eighty Kansas City teachers of high school English: Does your experience indicate that study of literary models such as essays and orations is helpful to the student in his writing? Sixty-four teachers answered, "Yes"; sixteen, "No." All answers were unsigned. Is it not probable that the sixteen teachers who answered "No" are unable from lack of proper training to connect the literary model with the student's writing?

allotted to direct improvement in speech and writing. The other argument against separate courses is that to teach practical English for one entire semester and literature for another entire semester is to lose the powerful stimulation of variety.

6. A question of local expediency. — Thus it is apparent that the main question can hardly be answered with absolute finality.[7] The change from literature to practical English should not be made so frequently as to interfere with concentration. Most teachers object strongly to splitting the work on a daily basis and giving two days to one sort of work and three to the other. On the other hand, if the change is too long delayed, exceptional teaching skill is required to keep students from feeling weariness and monotony. If a large high school employs five or six English teachers and can make conditions favorable, the advantages of separate semester courses probably outweigh the disadvantages. Favorable conditions mean a schedule that gives each teacher not more than 125 students distributed in five classes, not more than 75 students being in composition or practical English courses, only three different daily preparations, complete freedom from study hall duty, and only light committee work.

[7] Of eighty-four Kansas City teachers of high school English, forty-nine teachers expressed preference for separate semester courses in literature and practical English (the latter to include composition), twenty-nine teachers expressed preference for alternation within a period of three or four weeks, six teachers expressed preference for splitting the week into three days and two days for the two different types of work. We should bear in mind that these answers were given by teachers in very large high schools and that in small high schools an advantageous arrangement of separate semester courses is not always practicable.

SUGGESTED ARRANGEMENT OF SEMESTER COURSES

	First semester	Second semester
Ninth grade	Literature	Composition
Tenth grade	Composition	Literature
Eleventh grade	Literature	Composition
Twelfth grade	Composition	Literature

We should bear in mind, however, that many experienced teachers who have clear, constructive purposes are opposed to the absolute separation of the composition and the literature courses and favor alternation within briefer periods. A scheme of alternation by months may be so planned as to give the teacher's schedule the interest of variety.

SUGGESTED ALTERNATION OF WORK

Month	Ninth grade	Tenth grade	Eleventh grade	Twelfth grade
1st	Literature	Composition	Literature	Composition
2d	Composition	Literature	Composition	Literature
3d	Literature	Composition	Literature	Composition
4th	Composition	Literature	Composition	Literature
5th	Literature	Composition	Literature	Composition
6th	Composition	Literature	Composition	Literature
7th	Literature	Composition	Literature	Composition
8th	Composition	Literature	Composition	Literature
9th	Literature	Literature	Literature	Literature

III. THE PLANNING OF PRACTICAL ENGLISH WORK

In practical English work one of the chief problems consists in determining proportions and emphasis. Some time schemes are presented for the purpose of assisting in distribution of subject matter. Composition texts have greatly improved and frequently afford trustworthy guidance. Careful consideration should be given to the selection of the composition text. Practical English work may receive motive and vitality through the use of periodicals. In large schools specialized training in practical English may be offered through elective courses.

7. Adjustment of study time. — In planning the distribution of time we are considering chiefly the teaching or class time. But we must also take into account the possibilities of available study time. The teacher has about forty minutes with the students but he may be able also to control the use of an hour a day by each student. Successful teaching means such use of class time as leads to advantageous use of possible study time. For instance, more supplementary reading should be done when the material used in class demands slow development and careful drill. If our pupils are reading advantageously, we need not be troubled because the delivery of a set of oral compositions requires three successive class periods. If they are enjoying *The Spy* or *Jane Eyre* or *Captains Courageous,* we can afford to take whatever time is needed for developing the parts of speech and the relations of phrases or clauses. The more mechanical phases of practical English, such as dictation exercises, may be mastered by the pupil in his study time but all other parts of the work are mainly dependent upon the teacher's skill. The pupil studying grammar or punctuation alone may go astray. In the class period the teacher has an opportunity to check on every error and to prevent faulty interpretations and practices. During a practical English period, students should be advised to prepare first any brief assignment for the day and to give the rest of the English study hour to their home reading books.

8. Practical English time schemes. — The arrangement of practical English work may be varied in an almost infinite number of ways. The time schemes which follow are merely suggestive. Although they each cover a school

month, they are applicable to parts of semester courses. They do not embrace half the varieties of work that may well be undertaken, but they observe important basic principles of sequence. The first time scheme is related chiefly to mechanics and to letter writing; the second, to speech; the third, to argument.

TIME SCHEME FOR ELEMENTARY WORK IN PRACTICAL ENGLISH

Type of Work	Minutes of the Period	Order of Day in the Month
Spelling of 15 words: 10 newly assigned; 5 review	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19
Special spelling reviews: 40 words	20	5, 10, 15, 20
Assignment of model letters as dictation exercises	15	1, 11
Dictations given and corrected in class	30	2, 12
Assignment of oral composition subjects	15	1, 11
Assignment of original theme: letter applying for position	30	3
Discussion of good and bad forms in business letters	30	4
Reading of best original letters assigned on third day	20	5
Delivery of oral compositions by 15 students: 2 minutes each	30	6, 7, 16, 17
Discussion of mistakes and merits in oral compositions	15	8, 18
Assignment of original theme: letter expressing thanks	15	8
Class practice in folding business and friendship letters	30	9
Planning of project for exhibit of letters	20	10
Assignment of theme: three-paragraph letter in praise of book just read	30	13
Discussion of form and taste in friendship letters	30	14
Exhibit of letters which students have brought	20	15
Discussion of the formal note in the third person	15	18
Short-answer examination on letter writing	30	19
Reading of best letters assigned on thirteenth day	20	20

TIME SCHEME WITH ORAL ENGLISH EMPHASIS

Type of Work	Minutes of the Period	Order of Day in the Month
Pronunciation drills: 10 words	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19
Pronunciation reviews: 40 words	20	5, 10, 15, 20
Assignment of oral composition subjects	15	1, 6, 11, 16
Reports from the students of mistakes recently heard	15	1, 6, 11, 16
Delivery of oral compositions by 30 students, one minute each	30	4, 9, 14, 19
Discussion of mistakes and merits in oral compositions	20	5, 10, 15, 20
Teaching of practical grammar	30	2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18

TIME SCHEME FOR DEBATING

Type of Work	Minutes of the Period	Order of Day in the Month
Assignment of questions, teams, and debating dates	40	1
Discussion of materials and bibliography	40	2, 3
Discussion of a model brief and theory of briefing	40	4, 5
Assignment of writing a brief for the student's debate	40	6
General directions in regard to argument and debates	40	7, 8, 9
Directions to class about ranking debaters and awarding decision	40	10
Debates: 3 speakers on each team: 6 minutes allowed each speaker	40	11, 13, 15, 17, 19
Class criticism of debates from standpoint of argument and form	20	12, 14, 16, 18
Directions in regard to rebuttal and rebuttal cards	20	12, 14, 16, 18
Short answer test on debate questions handled and on theory of debating	40	20

9. **The practical English text.** — Composition textbooks can give helpful material and suggestions. They cannot, it is true, be a substitute for originality and resourcefulness on the part of the teacher. The dissatisfaction which inexperi-

enced teachers sometimes feel in connection with a rhetoric or composition textbook is caused by their demand for the book to do more than can be expected of any text. Even an excellent text in the hands of an unskilled teacher cannot work miracles, but in the hands of a capable teacher it may be an admirably effective tool. It reduces difficulties and facilitates progress. It reënforces work done in other ways. Since English is usually elective in the twelfth grade, it is best to arrange for completing the mastery of a good modern composition text by the time students have finished the eleventh grade. In many schools the study of such a text may be advantageously divided between the tenth and the eleventh grades. In these grades there are likely to be many weeks in which even a very expert teacher will find it possible to follow rather closely the arrangement and guidance of the text.

In the selection of a text careful discrimination is essential. Although the frequent changes in composition texts prove chiefly the perplexities of English teachers and the fickleness of public favor, no one can deny that there is a wide difference in the merit of texts. Let us see what general principles may aid in selection. A text for the eleventh grade should be varied and comprehensive and should treat adequately both usage and literary aims. A brief, clearly illustrated grammar summary is indispensable. Punctuation rules should be definitely stated by number so that the teacher in the correction of themes can cite a number for the aid of the student. A glossary of common errors in diction is both interesting and helpful. For purposes of application and practice the text should provide exercises of

every conceivable type. Each group of sentences for drill should deal with errors of one order so that students may not be confused by complex problems. In large numbers of exercises alternatives for choice should be presented. Students find keen satisfaction in distinguishing between the correct and the incorrect and they like to drill themselves if only they know exactly what to do.

About half of the text or a little less than half should be devoted to literary aims. Definitions of rhetorical terms should be so simple and clear that the student can readily retain them. Illustrations of definitions should be striking and absolutely unmistakable. Very definite rhetorical exercises have the greatest value. A student gets useful training from making well-chosen loose sentences periodic, from putting similar ideas into balanced form, from putting contrasting ideas into antithetical form, or from rearranging parts of sentences to secure climax. On the other hand, he is merely bewildered by a vague or indefinite exercise, such as the requirement to choose more vivid words or to strengthen a piece of weak writing. The text should have a liberal supply of composition subjects so that at times the student may be permitted to use these in lieu of those suggested by the teacher. Literary extracts cited to show rhetorical principles should have some definite appeal, such as concreteness, humor, or pathos. An ideal text will present numerous topics which have immediate relation to the practical needs of life, such as good form in a recitation or an examination paper, the characteristics of a good conversation, or the best method of preparing a brief after-dinner speech.

10. **The aid of periodicals.** — The immense value of periodicals to the teaching of practical English is a comparatively recent discovery.[8] In preparing reports students should come in contact with all standard magazines. Occasional use should be made of *Scribner's, Harper's,* the *Century,* and the *Atlantic Monthly.* For systematic class study, however, the weekly periodical has advantages over the monthly magazine. Classic literature provides essays and short stories not essentially different from the material in the monthly. But a good weekly periodical furnishes a type of thought and information for which there is elsewhere no equivalent. It makes available a vocabulary which the student can see is actually needed in discussing the affairs of the world today. In the ideal high school course every student would subscribe annually to a definite weekly periodical. Since many periodicals are making remarkable price concessions to encourage class room use, the expense is not necessarily to be regarded as prohibitive.

11. **Business English.** — If the material of the practical English work is well selected and organized and is systematically presented, the need of separate so-called business English courses will be greatly diminished. The demand for such courses came in part from the discovery that the inaccuracy of many high school graduates is a very serious vocational handicap. The cure for such inaccuracy is to be found in well planned habit-forming exercises. It is obvious, however, that in the formation of habits time is an important element and that such habit-forming exercises

[8] For some specific suggestions concerning the use of periodicals see Chapter III, p. 162, and Chapter IV, p. 200.

ought to be incorporated in each year of the high school course. In so far as large schools are able in the last two years to provide numerous elective and alternative courses, a business English course should be offered largely for the purpose of giving training in business correspondence. Although the subject of English can hardly bear the full re-

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A corner of the journalism class that won the state prize for the best school paper.

sponsibility for teaching language adjustments to every type of business situation, such a course may also give considerable attention to tactful interviewing. But students should not find it necessary to take business English in order to get adequate training in form, punctuation, spelling, practical grammar or oral composition.

12. An elective course in journalism. — If in the twelfth grade a high school is able to provide enough alternative courses, a course in journalism gives interesting and varied training in practical English.[9] Usually in such a course the chief purpose is the publishing of the high school paper.[10] Such a project affords excellent practice in writing editorials, news, feature articles, and reporters' stories. It gives the teacher a chance to illustrate every means of making composition lively and entertaining. The contact which students in securing advertisements establish with the business world may have distinct educational value. The incidental study of the best city newspapers is likely to open a new world to alert and original thinkers and may be fruitful in suggesting vocational opportunities.

IV. THE SELECTION OF LITERATURE

So far we have been considering varieties of practical English work. From this field we turn to the organization of the literature course. The first principle that should guide us in the selection of literature is interest. On the basis of interest we shall give a large place to fiction, drama, and narrative poetry. The second principle in selection is importance in world literature. The third principle is the contribution of a classic to the student's use of language. The fourth principle is adaptation to the advancement of the student. The fifth principle is variety.

13. Choice affected by interest. — On the whole literature courses are in a more stable condition than are practical

[9] The class should be warned that the course in journalism is not to be interpreted as true professional preparation. The National Council of Teachers of English has deprecated the designation of secondary school classes as "journalism" classes: "Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting of National Council of Teachers of English," *English Journal*, X, 46.

[10] Every teacher should read an eminently practical article: William Lewin, "The Business of Running a School Paper," *English Journal*, XI, 8–13.

English courses. Considerable progress has been made in selecting and arranging the longer classics for study from the seventh to the twelfth grade. Although in a few cases the selection may be accidental and traditional, many classics have been thoroughly tested and have gravitated to the grade for which they are best suited. The principles that should be applied in judging the value of a classic in the curriculum are exceedingly clear and definite. The first of these is that any literary work studied in school shall have at least a fair degree of interest for a decided majority of the class. This dictum, commonly enough accepted but sometimes misinterpreted, misapplied, and perverted, obligates us to define interest. A classic has the power to interest adolescents if it leads them to form opinions of their own about the subject matter and to desire to state these opinions. Interest in a classic also means that the desire is formed, even though the intention may never be carried out, of reading either a similar work or some other work by the same author. It is better to consider interest in a classic rather than liking for it because the word "like" is singularly ambiguous. The mother of a ninth grade boy said to the boy's teacher, "My son doesn't like the literature he is studying now." The teacher, eager to know the effect of *Sohrab and Rustum,* glanced her inquiry. "No," continued the mother, "he says he just can't stand to study it. Last night when he began to read it, he got up and walked the floor; it's so dreadfully sad." Though the mother said that the boy did not "like" the poem, she offered the best possible proof of his interest in it. The boy would have been eager to read anything that promised him a similar thrill.

A sufficient reason for making interest a foremost consideration is that nearly all real literature suitable for young people was written solely for adults. It is true indeed that *Alice in Wonderland* and *Treasure Island* each came into being for the pleasure of a gifted child. But as notable exceptions they simply prove the rule. It is also true that in teachers' conventions speakers frequently make singular comments about literary origins; they seem to imply that Longfellow, writing *Hiawatha,* had the fifth grade in mind and that Whittier composed *Snow-Bound* for the edification of the eighth grade. Proof that such delusions may be actually entertained is afforded by the request coming to Vachel Lindsay from a publishing firm, that he write a book of verse for the ninth grade ![11] The truth behind the incredible misconception is that a few great books written for adults happen to be close to the thought and tastes of boys and girls and that many other great books are remote by countless leagues. Experience and experiment are needed to cull the few from the many. Scholars who have had little chance for practical testing will go so wild as to suggest Kipling's *Kim* or Conrad's *Lord Jim* for the average adolescent ! One might as well expect a person without musical endowment or training to delight in Bach.

It is apparent that any teacher of broad experience has innumerable opportunities for observing and gauging the interest that students feel in different classics. Both questionnaires answered by teachers and questionnaires answered by pupils are helpful in determining interest values and

[11] Vachel Lindsay, "What It Means to be a Poet in America," *Saturday Evening Post,* November 13, 1926, Vol. 199, No. 20, p. 48.

may properly exert an influence on the course of study. But the discrepancies noticeable in various investigations tend to show that no single questionnaire can be viewed as conclusive or final. The discrepancies do not invalidate either the painstaking character of the investigations or the sincerity of student reports, but they are the natural outcome of numerous peculiar conditions which affect one questionnaire and which do not affect another. The extreme popularity which some investigations prove for *Silas Marner*[12] may be in some slight measure due to the fact that in many state courses of study[13] it is read as late as the eleventh grade. Positive evidence may be produced to show that if *Julius Caesar* is studied too early, it is rated as low in interest and that if it is studied late, it is rated very high.[14] Furthermore, one or two masterpieces such as *The Merchant of Venice* have peculiarly suffered from repetition within the same school system.[15] Another curious fact is that a few classics arouse special enthusiasm in some students and positive

[12] See Ward H. Green, "Comprehension in High School Literature," *English Journal,* XV, 765–772. This investigation credits greatest popularity among classics widely studied to *A Tale of Two Cities, Silas Marner, Ivanhoe, Macbeth, Idylls of the King.* Sarah T. Muir, "Pupil Reactions to the Classics," *English Journal,* XI, 167–172, especially 168, states that *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Silas Marner* are preferred to all other classics. Cf. a somewhat lower interest rating given to these two novels by R. H. Franzen and F. B. Knight, *Textbook Selection* (Baltimore: Warwick and York, 1922), p. 25. See also C. S. Crow, *Evaluation of English Literature in the High School* (New York: Columbia University, 1924), pp. 116–117.

[13] Earl Hudelson, "Our Courses of Study in Literature," *English Journal,* XII, 481–487.

[14] Clarence Stratton, "Pupil Choices of Books," *English Journal,* XIII, 422–425. The investigation shows that *Julius Caesar* is rated low in interest by junior high school students and rated high by senior high school students.

[15] Sarah T. Muir, loc. cit., *English Journal,* XI, 170, mentions the study of *The Merchant of Venice* in both the upper grades and the high school. Even in well organized city systems such repetitions are altogether too frequent. The remedy is to be found in closer coöperation between the upper grade English teachers and the high school English teachers.

antipathy in others. The explanation is that under average teaching conditions these classics are especially attractive to students of marked ability but incomprehensible to limited or deficient students.[16] Finally, while most investigators recognize the effect of good teaching on pupil reactions, they do not always take into account the varying results connected with prolonged versus rapid study. Undoubtedly some classics are hurt by the excessive length of time given them. If Chaucer's *Prologue* is taught with humor and sympathy in three or four days without much technical study, it is likely to have more agreeable associations for the student than if it is taught with equal humor and sympathy but with considerable attention to technical knowledge during a period of two or three weeks. Thus the question of interest is far more complex than might at first appear and it should always be viewed as a relative rather than an absolute matter.

14. **The interest of fiction.** — All investigations in regard to interest are in accord concerning the supreme importance of exciting plots. Novels are invariably ranked higher in interest than other types of reading. Moreover, the romantic novel is much better adapted to the earlier years of a high school course than is the realistic. Students like novels which have much physical conflict, rapid movement, fearful perils, and hair-breadth escapes. Stevenson understood the reading appetite of children when he wrote in regard to *Treasure Island,* "If the kids don't love this, they have all gone rotten since my day." The proper

[16] Ibid. p. 170. The investigation shows that students do not feel neutral about the *Odyssey,* that they either like or dislike it heartily.

place for *Ivanhoe* and *A Tale of Two Cities* is both determined by *a priori* reasoning and is also confirmed by experiment.[17] *The Three Musketeers, The Count of Monte Cristo,* and *Lorna Doone* have a justly earned popularity with high school students.[18] Highly sensational novels are read with avidity even by people who read slowly. A cook who had only an eighth grade education was asked to try Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles;* for the first time in her life she let the beans burn. If in the earlier years of the high school course students are gripped by startling tales of adventure and physical danger, they acquire the reading habit and learn to read with increasing speed. They gain the power to read by reading with curiosity. Nothing so much whets curiosity as the movement of a good plot. Reading novels primarily for the plot, students gradually attain other æsthetic satisfactions. In the last two years of the high school course increasing use may be made of great realists, such as Thackeray, George Eliot, Jane Austen, Howells, and Balzac. We are still very far from adequately conceiving the immense educational value of fiction.[19] The

[17] The writer tried the experiment of furnishing 339 seniors in the High School of Springfield, Missouri, with lists of classics that they had studied in class during the preceding four years. They were asked to give the numbers 1, 2, and 3 to the three classics which they considered the most interesting. *Ivanhoe* received decidedly the highest ranking. It was given first place by 81 students. No other classic received half so many firsts. Mention should probably be made of the fact that *A Tale of Two Cities* was not in the list studied.

[18] This question was put to 339 seniors in the Springfield, Missouri, High School, "Of novels which you have not studied in class which one do you regard as the most interesting that you have ever read?" The votes were widely scattered but the five novels receiving the largest number were, in order of popularity, *Ben Hur, Beau Geste, The Three Musketeers, Lorna Doone,* and *The Count of Monte Cristo.* Who can fail to attach significance to the fact that these high choices are of an exceedingly romantic character?

[19] For recommended lists of novels and short stories, see pages 45–52.

reading of good fiction means that the student is unconsciously absorbing a thousand generalizations and theories concerning social and ethical problems, finance, sex, and theology.

15. **The interest of drama.** — Frequency lists are in general agreement in ranking plays next to novels in interest. The interest of drama is connected both with dialogue and with rapid plot movement. We all know that in reading any type of fiction we frequently skip description and seldom skip dialogue. Alice of Wonderland considered that books have just two merits, pictures and "conversations." Since the entire texture of drama is dialogue, it is altogether natural that students should give plays a high interest rating. Perhaps the rating would be even higher if it were not for the fact that the student's conception of drama is usually based on Shakespeare. It is true that Shakespearean drama has a strong hold on pupils of limited as well as of high intelligence. Nevertheless, it involves numerous difficulties due to richness of vocabulary, considerable archaic language and multiplicity of characters. These difficulties are in part offset by amazing concreteness and highly sensational plots. As we might expect, Shakespeare's tragedies frequently receive a higher interest rating from students than do the comedies.[20] This rating is in direct accord with the fact that tragic conflicts and impending dis-

[20] See R. H. Franzen and F. B. Knight, *Textbook Selection* (Baltimore): Warwick and York, 1922), p. 24. No Shakespeare comedy is included in the First or Second Preferred List.

Frances Mary Hughes, "'What do high school teachers say about the classics at present used?" *English Journal*, XIII, 331–335, finds that the highest favor of teachers is accorded to the following classics: *Silas Marner*, *Macbeth*, *Ivanhoe*, *Hamlet*, and *A Tale of Two Cities*. We note that two of the five classics are Shakespeare tragedies.

asters are powerful sources of excitement and suspense. At least one play of Shakespeare may well be assigned to each year of the high school course. An innovation that should and will come in the near future is the more extensive use of serious or tragic modern drama.[21] Every senior should be familiar with Ibsen's *Ghosts* and Galsworthy's *Justice*.

16. **The interest of narrative poetry.** — In accordance with the universal and unfailing lure of plot and story, poetry, aside from lyrics which are memorized, should be largely narrative. It is true that many narrative poems such as Noyes's *The Highwayman* or Scott's *The Lady of the Lake* do not have supreme poetic excellence, but if a student enjoys them he is making greater progress toward true appreciation of poetry than if he reads *Lycidas* with perplexity and distaste. Coleridge's *Christabel* or Keats's *Eve of St. Agnes* is likely to do more toward startling a boy or girl into the recognition of what poetry really means than is the assignment of numerous lyrics. The mistake of including in the course a great number of extremely subtle, reflective poems is illustrated in the answer that a fifteen-year-old boy gave to the inquiry as to whether he liked poetry. After some hesitation he replied, "Well, a little of it will go a mighty long way." He would have been less painfully conscious of his æsthetic limitations if he had been given fewer poems from *The Golden Treasury* and more narrative poems. As a matter of fact, students, reading short narrative poems, are at first captivated by the story and in the end are moved by other appeals. They are ultimately spellbound by the grim horror in Rossetti's *Sister Helen*

[21] For a recommended list of plays see pages 53–54.

and Lanier's *The Revenge of Hamish.* They find the various enchantments of Amy Lowell's *Patterns* irresistible. From this poem they gain a concrete picture of eighteenth century life ruled by formalities when gardens and walks were laid out in geometrical patterns and a lady's dress was curiously boned and flounced. They take pleasure in the assonances and the internal rhymes of the free verse. They are deeply stirred by the passion of the lady who receives the terrible message that her lover has been killed in the pattern called war and who cries out against the cruelty of conventions.

17. **The interest of reflective and lyrical poetry.** — In so far as poems which are not narrative are included in the course, they should have a positive and proved interest value. The verdict of experience is that high school students have a romantic liking for the funereal and are almost invariably fond of Gray's *Elegy.*[22] As a rule, however, the only reflective or lyrical poems which should be used are those in which the emotion reaches a white heat. Cowper's *On Receipt of my Mother's Picture,* Mrs. Browning's *The Cry of the Children* and Hood's *The Song of the Shirt* deserve a place in the course because of their intensely poignant pathos. A place should also be found for a few poems that are especially rich in color and physical sensation. In the eight lines of Browning's *Meeting at Night* there is appeal to the senses of smell, of hearing, and of sight and there are five different color words. The entire design of

22 "The universal appeal in Gray's *Elegy* usually reaches limited students," Margaret M. Alltucker, *The School Review,* XXXI, 653–661. The entire article is used by Willis L. Uhl, *Principles of Secondary Education* (New York: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1925), pp. 321–329.

Davidson's *Butterflies* is related to color. The story of a life is told through the succession of white, blue, gold, and black butterflies. We must not altogether omit poems remarkable for sound effects. Students enjoy the discovery that the sound of Poe's *The Bells* even more than the words expresses the whole gamut of human emotions, merriment, happiness, fear, and sorrow. Very little comment by a teacher is needed to show that *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day* reproduces the music of many different instruments. Noyes's *A Victory Dance* gives by the movement of the verse the wild mood of spectral dancers.[23]

18. Choice affected by literary distinction. — Regarding the principle of interest as fundamental, we must balance it with other considerations. The selections taught should be as far as possible those that connect in many ways with the permanent thought of humanity. They will accordingly be to a great measure those that have distinction in the universal history of literature. The term "literary distinction" is probably less vague than the term "literary merit." There need be no sharp conflict between the principle of interest properly interpreted and the principle of literary distinction. Many of the great names in English and in American letters have contributed at least one work that has a fair degree of interest for bright high school students. Such a work is Chaucer's *Prologue,* which gives an invaluable comprehensive picture of mediæval characters.

[23] The principle of interest finds its justification in the very purpose of literature, which is to afford enjoyment. Theo. W. H. Irion, *Comprehension Difficulties of Ninth Grade Students in the Study of Literature* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1925), pp. 69–72, is distrustful of reports as to feeling reactions and stresses comprehension as opposed to feeling.

A few of the more humorous *Sir Roger de Coverley* papers should be included in every English course because they interpret English life in the eighteenth century and because they mark an epoch in the history of the essay and contain within themselves the germ of the novel.[24]

Both from the standpoint of interest and from the standpoint of literary distinction and importance the famous myths and epics should be made familiar to high school students. Unhappily in many village and consolidated rural high schools, mythology is practically ignored. A considerable number of graduates from these schools have actually never heard of either Apollo or Venus. Such a condition cannot be remedied rapidly enough. Before the ninth grade is reached children should know the chief incidents connected with the capture of Troy. A prose translation of Books VI to XII of the *Odyssey* should be studied in the ninth or the tenth grade. Knowledge of the wanderings of Odysseus is indispensable for the interpretation of literary allusions constantly encountered. The *Iliad* may be covered in a very brief version. In fact, in one class period a teacher with any feeling for story can narrate the entire tale of Briseis and Chryseis, of the wrath of Achilles, of the death of Patroclus, and of the conflict between Achilles and Hector. A high school graduate should not be baffled by an ordinary political cartoon showing the Sirens or Scylla and Charybdis or the wooden horse.

19. **Choice affected by practical worth.** — The third

[24] Morris B. Sanford, "Reforming the Study of English," *English Journal*, XIII, 200–205, shows that there is frequently a marked growth in students through the study of certain less popular classics and that this growth is not attained if the principle of interest alone is considered.

principle determining the course is that from some literary selections, especially prose, there should be a helpful contribution to practical uses of English. At times this principle may seem to operate in direct contradiction to the principle of interest. It is of course absolutely impossible to find essays or orations that rank as high in student interest as do stories and novels. But although well-organized essays are read with less zest than are stories, they can be used by skillful teachers to give training of priceless benefit.[25] If this were not the case, Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson* and Carlyle's *Essay on Burns* would have been banished long ago from all English courses. The real reason why essays and orations persistently keep their place is that able and influential teachers secure through such material educational results attainable by no other means.[26] Expository and argumentative prose should indeed be limited in amount but should not be omitted altogether. As far as possible the prose which is used should be a safe model for the writing of the student. From this standpoint Emerson's essays are unsatisfactory because the brilliant sentences are often without sequence. On the other hand, though Macaulay has his faults, he has much to teach beginners in regard to clear organization and effective emphasis. A similar advantage accrues from the study of Palmer's *Self-Cultivation in English*. This essay may be used for the inductive development

[25] Experiments in silent reading prove progress in speed and comprehension through study of key sentences in exposition and through paragraph analysis. See C. E. Germane and E. G. Germane, *Silent Reading* (New York: Row, Peterson and Company, 1922), pp. 298–304.

[26] Theo. W. H. Irion, "Economy in the Teaching of High School Literature," *English Journal*, XVI, 114–119, advocates the teaching of more expository prose even in the ninth grade.

of all rhetorical principles. It has the double merit of giving the most fruitful suggestions about practical English and of admirably illustrating the standards presented.

20. **Choice affected by simplicity.** — The fourth principle in selecting literature is that it should be adapted to the intelligence and the advancement of the students. In the main, this principle is covered by interest. Unless students can adequately grasp a selection without excessive and prolonged effort, they are not likely to derive much pleasure from it. If a selection seems equally suitable to two different grades, the desires of those teachers who handle the lower work should have preference because it is always more difficult to find strong literature which is within the capacity of the lower grade. For instance, *The Merchant of Venice* should be assigned to the eighth grade if in a city system both eighth grade teachers and ninth grade teachers wish to use it.[27] It is the most melodramatic play of Shakespeare and is therefore the easiest for immature minds. In connection with the principle of comprehension it is necessary always to give consideration to the skill of the teacher. A teacher who can rapidly impart facts of background essential for interpretation and who can make such information entertaining can bring difficult literature within the range of pupils of low ability. A novice in teaching will get best results by using easier material.[28] In many large city high schools English classes are sectioned on the basis

[27] High school students, rating Shakespeare plays, give the highest vote to *The Merchant of Venice* according to Willis L. Uhl, *The Materials of Reading* (New York: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1924), VI, 156.

[28] At the close of this chapter are two literature courses of which one is much simpler than the other. See pages 40–44.

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of intelligence tests.[29] Where such separation is practicable, the literature given in the brightest section can be of a heavier sort than that given in the slowest section. In the strong section there may be more consideration of the principles of literary distinction and practical worth and less consideration of the principle of interest.[30]

21. **Choice affected by variety.** — The final principle which should determine the selection of classics is the need for variety. Each year should include numerous types. Frequent alternation of prose and poetry means relief and stimulation. There should be no disproportionate emphasis of any one author. The joy of teaching Shakespeare affords no justification for indulging classes in a steady Shakespearean diet to the exclusion of helpful prose models. Not more than one month should be given to any single classic. It is true that there is enough thought in Burke's *Conciliation* to engage a class for two months. But a month allows enough time for some thorough study and much broad surveying of a speech that was delivered in less than two hours. A month should be sufficient to study adequately a play that can be acted in less than four hours. An excessive expenditure of time on a few classics greatly limits the range of literature that may be offered. It is far better to give a month to six books of the *Odyssey* and to introduce the

[29] In many school systems, as in Kansas City, the sectioning is based on a combination of intelligence tests, previous grades, and teachers' judgments.

[30] Theo. W. H. Irion, *op. cit.*, p. 71, has shown that "a differentiation between the materials to be used with groups of students on different levels of intelligence is absolutely necessary." He holds that pupils whose *IQ*'s are below 90 would profit little from the selections which he has used in his experiments. In the small high school where sectioning is impossible, the best plan is a compromise between the literature which would be adapted to the strong students and that which would be adapted to students of low ability.

pupils to Kipling, Barrie, and Hardy than it is to read the whole *Odyssey* and to fail to point out avenues for future reading.

22. **The College Entrance Requirements.** — Any one who is planning a literature course must give some consideration to the lists of books on which the larger colleges and universities have agreed to base their entrance examinations. These lists, commonly called the College Entrance Requirements, have steadily been broadened in scope and improved in adaptation. On the whole, they have had a most beneficial effect on English teaching. In view of the general merit of the selections, it may seem captious and gratuitous to point to errors or limitations. But perhaps a word of warning to inexperienced teachers may not be out of place. The lists are designed to be extensive enough to gratify all types of taste and to correspond to all types of ability. Accordingly, although many of the books are suitable even to the average high school, very cautious discrimination is needed. To illustrate, in the essay and biography group of the present comprehensive list there are various selections which might be advantageously studied with private tutors but which would not fit well in the usual public school course. Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* is too philosophical to serve as a home reading book and for class study would not yield valuable enough returns for the time consumed. A collection of Bacon's essays is hardly suitable; one or at most two essays will serve the purpose of showing Bacon's power and aphoristic style. Hazlitt is too profoundly intellectual for the majority of high school seniors.

23. **The problem of literary collections.** — For the literature course it is not easy to decide whether to have the students purchase dozens of paperbound classics or to have them use one well-bound collection. Perhaps more perfect selection is possible if the separate classics are used, but the difficulties and inconveniences are considerable. Fortunately there has been a vast improvement in literary collections for high school use. In some cases the collection is combined with a survey of English or of American literature. In selecting such a book the teacher should give consideration to two requisites. In the first place, much of the literature should be narrative. In the second place, there should not be an excessive number of abridged classics. In any collection a few abridgments are unavoidable. A few famous extracts, such as Byron's *Waterloo,* are their own justification. But as a rule, the classic, whether poem, essay, or story, should be complete. A student who reads a work in its entirety is more likely to appreciate the author's design and the symmetry of his form. In some communities it may be possible for the students to purchase both a large collection and also several separate classics.

V. A SPECIAL PURPOSE OF THE LITERATURE COURSE

As far as possible, we should use the literature course to bring about improvement in adult reading choices. To this end we should make our students acquainted with some admirable contemporary literature and with a large number of entertaining books for home reading. Surveys of literary history may be so taught as to cause the desire to know intimately many delightful writers.

24. **The reading of graduates.** — Leaders in education occasionally imply that if high school graduates do not

generally continue to read books by the authors taught in school there is something radically wrong either with the course of study or with our teaching. The sad truth is that great numbers not only of high school graduates but also of college graduates fail to read a single Shakespeare play after graduation. This fact is the more deplorable because students are ready to agree that Shakespeare is fascinating. But even graduates whose reading is on a low plane are invariably grateful because their intellectual capital acquired in school included some Shakespeare plays. In connection with the main question we must recognize that the literature course should not be too far above the ordinary interest of the students. If we aim too high, we shall fail to take the students with us. If we aim too low, we shall do nothing toward elevating taste. On the whole, our literature courses show at least some results that are gratifying. Large numbers of high school graduates choose better fiction because they have been under the temporary influence of such writers as Thackeray and Hardy. A considerable number of high school graduates have acquired a liking for modern drama.

25. **The value of contemporary literature.** — In so far as we can introduce students to great living writers, we may exert a happy influence on their future reading. No teacher, to be sure, is justified in including in the course sentimental, second-rate best-sellers. But we have a great range of living writers whose permanence is assured.[31] Students should not

[31] Rewey Belle Inglis, "The Minnesota Study of Teachers' Preparation," *English Journal*, XVI, 60–61, finds that Minnesota teachers lack knowledge of modern literature. The same finding is probably true of high school teachers in other states.

conceive of literature as something completed and belonging to the past. They should think of it as having ever fresh growth and vitality. If they become interested in the plays of Barrie and Shaw and in the novels of Galsworthy and Archibald Marshall, they are less likely to find recreation in Harold Bell Wright and Temple Bailey. Library assignments of powerful poems by living writers serve to correct the delusion that the great poets are all dead. A high school senior who reads Ralph Hodgson's *Eve* or Robinson's *Flammonde* discovers that poetic inspiration has not failed in the twentieth century. In any attempts that we make to introduce students to modern literature we are aided by their consuming curiosity. The motive which actuates them is possibly in some cases the same motive which causes them to desire the latest fashions, but it may be utilized for a worthy end. Great numbers of high school students have read Thornton Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and have thereby acquired more discriminating literary taste.[32]

26. Books for home reading. — The range of literature covered can be vastly enlarged through the assignment of many easy and entertaining home reading books. In the very fact that certain literature courses show exceedingly difficult reading to be done outside of class, there is excellent ground for suspicion that such courses are only courses on paper and have never been tried in practice. Is it not absurd to count that students unaided can read a play of Shakespeare before they have studied in class two or three plays ? Are young people so fond of abstractions that they

[32] See Chapter VII for some books that will aid teachers in acquiring familiarity with contemporary literature.

can be expected to master alone essays that would be baffling if taken up with the help of a teacher? Is it not inevitable that the great mass of supplementary reading should be fiction? Indeed, in the junior high school the teacher's view should be that almost any reading for pleasure is better than none. It is infinitely better for ninth grade boys and girls to delight in Zane Grey, Oliver Curwood, and Gene Stratton Porter, than it is for them to fail to experience the joy of reading. If, however, they can be induced to sample a better type of entertaining novels, they are likely to detect the sentimentalism of their old favorites. If they once enjoy Dumas or Stevenson, they are on the road to all literary pleasures. Although *Ben Hur* is somewhat melodramatic and flashy, it has many solid values and is an admirable book for home reading. In the last two years of the senior high school, part of the home reading may be modern plays, which are as thrilling as any novels. Advanced students may be led to dip into bright emotional autobiography or biography in which the element of gossip is large if this reading can be motivated by oral reports. Though the home reading must not be too abstract or profound, it may cover a large number of writers.

27. **Histories of literature.** — Literature itself is so much more important than the history of literature that strong arguments can actually be offered for omitting the history work. Practical experience, however, confirms the view that students find their knowledge of literature clarified and their enjoyment of it enhanced by survey courses. Many types of mind find increased satisfaction in literature when they study it as the product of a period, when they

understand the social causes behind literary tendencies, and when they see the influence of circumstances on men of genius. Obviously, the survey courses should not be attempted until students are familiar with many authors of many different times. A survey course can be profitable only if the student's literary knowledge derived from past reading is constantly utilized and if former periods of literary history are compared and contrasted with the present age. A survey of American literature, it must be conceded, is probably less illuminating than a survey of English literature. At the same time, it has enough value to justify a place in the eleventh grade provided the time given to it is not excessive. In selecting a text for the history of either English or American literature it is absolutely necessary to place a high premium on brevity. Reading matter should be reduced and the place of reading matter should be taken by attractive illustrations. Minor authors should receive no treatment in a book which is designed for a high school survey course. The aim in presenting literary history is not mainly to give general information but rather to make literature seem more vital and more enticing.

So far our purpose has been to consider the general aims and organization of an English course. The uncertain and tentative status of all English courses is due to the complicated problems of the subject and the varying abilities and preparation of pupils and teachers. Courses are inevitably influenced by standards reached in each of the upper grades and by the equipment of high school teachers. As upper grade and high school teachers have more exten-

sive training, our English courses will undoubtedly be more thorough in practical essentials and more comprehensive in cultural range. At the present time courses should be based not on the possible accomplishment of an exceptional teacher but rather on the probable accomplishment of many teachers.

SOME SUGGESTED LITERATURE COURSES

The following literature courses for different grades are based on investigations of many courses of study. They may be useful to teachers who are not held to a particular state course of study or who wish to make slight deviations from the course provided. The variant courses may also be helpful in suggesting alternate classics to teachers who find confused conditions resulting from former capricious changes in the local course. There is no intention of indicating that the time laid down for any literary selection is necessarily the only right time. The time given, however, is an average estimate based on the opinion of a large number of teachers. If a selection is given a higher place in the course than that prescribed in these plans, a shorter teaching time may be adequate. In any case it is probable that many beginning teachers will be glad to have a definite time for a general guide. Where Plan I varies from Plan II, the literature of Plan I is the more difficult. Students whose ability is limited or who have not had thorough literature training in the preceding grades are likely to profit more from the easier course.

PLAN I

Seventh Grade

First month: Hale's *The Man Without a Country,* two weeks
Tennyson's *Enoch Arden,* two weeks
Third month: Van Dyke's *The Other Wise Man,* two weeks
Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,* two weeks
Fifth month: Whittier's *Snow-Bound,* three weeks
Seventh month: Old Testament narratives, four weeks
Ninth month: Holmes' *Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill Battle,* one week
Browning's *The Pied Piper of Hamelin,* one week
Short poems for memorizing, two weeks

Eighth Grade

Second month: Stevenson's *Treasure Island,* four weeks
Fourth month: Franklin's *Autobiography,* four weeks
Sixth month: Longfellow's *Evangeline,* three weeks
Short poems for memorizing, one week
Eighth month: Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice,* four weeks
Ninth month: Cooper's *The Spy,* four weeks

Ninth Grade

First month: Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans,* four weeks
Third month: Odyssey, Butcher and Lang's translation, Books VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII only, four weeks
Fifth month: Irving's *Westminster Abbey,* seven days
Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* five days
Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum,* eight days
Seventh month: Scott's *The Lady of the Lake,* four weeks
Ninth month: Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities,* four weeks

Tenth Grade

Second month: Scott's *Ivanhoe,* four weeks
Fourth month: Shakespeare's *As You Like It,* four weeks
Sixth month: Sir Roger de Coverley Papers, two weeks
Myth of Troy, two weeks
Eighth month: Poe's stories, four weeks
Ninth month: George Eliot's *Silas Marner,* four weeks

Eleventh Grade

First month: History of American literature covering the Colonial Period and the early New York group. two weeks
Freneau's *The Indian Burying Ground, Nathan Hale,* Bryant's *Lines to a Waterfowl* and *Thanatopsis,* Irving's *Stratford-on-Avon* and *The Spectre Bridegroom,* two weeks
Third month: History of the New England Period and authors, two weeks
Emerson's *The Concord Hymn,* Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (read mainly as a home reading book), Longfellow's *Paul Revere's Ride* and *The Skeleton in Armor,* Holmes' *The Deacon's Masterpiece* and *Contentment,* Lowell's *The Courtin',* two weeks
Fifth month: Biographies of Poe, Whitman, Lanier, Clemens, and Howells, two weeks
Poe's *The Bells* and *The Raven,* Whitman's *O Captain! My Captain,* Lanier's *The Revenge of Hamish,* Hay's *Jim Bludso,* Harte's *The Luck of Roaring Camp* and *Tennessee's Partner,* Amy Lowell's *Patterns,* Robinson's *Richard Cory,* two weeks
Seventh month: Palmer's *Self-Cultivation in English,* three weeks
Short poems for memorizing, one week
Ninth month: Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* four weeks

Twelfth Grade

Second month: History of English literature from the beginning to Shakespeare, three weeks

Chaucer's *Prologue, The Nun's Priest's Tale, Baby Lon,* and *The Two Sisters* (to illustrate ballads), one week

Fourth month: Macbeth, three weeks

L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and *Comus,* one week

Sixth month: History of English literature from Shakespeare to Wordsworth, three weeks

Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* and *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day,* Gray's *An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,* Cowper's *On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture,* Burns' *Tam o' Shanter,* one week

(At the close of this month Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* should be started by the entire class as a home reading book)

Eighth month: Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson,* two weeks

History of English literature in the nineteenth century, two weeks

Ninth month: Keats' *The Eve of St. Agnes,* Tennyson's *Guinevere,* Rossetti's *The White Ship* and *Sister Helen,* two weeks

Ibsen's *Ghosts* and *A Doll's House,* two weeks

PLAN II

Seventh Grade

First month: Arabian Nights, four weeks

Third month: Longfellow's *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* four weeks

Fifth month: Seton's *Wild Animals I Have Known,* four weeks

Seventh month: Short poems for memorizing, two weeks

Hale's *The Man Without a Country,* two weeks

Ninth month: Clemens' *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,* four weeks

Eighth Grade

Second month: Stevenson's *Treasure Island,* four weeks
Fourth month: Lowell's *The Vision of Sir Launfal,* two weeks
Bryant's *Sella,* two weeks
Sixth month: Selected short stories, four weeks
Eighth month: Longfellow's *Evangeline,* four weeks
Ninth month: Jackson's *Ramona,* four weeks

Ninth Grade

First month: Wister's *The Virginian,* four weeks
Third month: Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery,* four weeks
Fifth month: Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice,* four weeks
Seventh month: Collection of short narrative poems, four weeks
Ninth month: Blackmore's *Lorna Doone,* four weeks

Tenth Grade

Second month: Scott's *The Talisman,* four weeks
Fourth month: Shakespeare's *A Midsummer-Night's Dream,* four weeks
Sixth month: Cooper's *The Deerslayer,* four weeks
Eighth month: Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum,* eight days
Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel,* twelve days
Ninth month: George Eliot's *Silas Marner,* four weeks

Eleventh Grade

First month: History of American literature covering the Colonial Period and the early New York group, two weeks

Washington's *Farewell Address*, Bryant's *Lines to a Waterfowl*, Irving's *The Legend of the Three Beautiful Princesses* and *The Legend of the Moor's Legacy* (from *The Alhambra*), two weeks

Third month: History of the New England Period and authors, two weeks

Emerson's *The Concord Hymn*, Hawthorne's *David Swan*, Longfellow's *Paul Revere's Ride* and *The Skeleton in Armor*, Holmes' *The Deacon's Masterpiece*, Lowell's *The Courtin'*, two weeks

Fifth month: Biographies of Poe, Whitman, Lanier, Clemens, and Howells, two weeks

Poe's poems and stories, Harte's *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, Clemens' *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, two weeks

Seventh month: Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, four weeks

Ninth month: Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, four weeks

Twelfth Grade

Second month: History of English literature from the beginning to Shakespeare, four weeks

Fourth month: Chaucer's *Prologue*, one week

Macbeth, three weeks

Sixth month: History of English literature from Shakespeare to Wordsworth, four weeks

Eighth month: Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, two weeks

Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*, two weeks

Ninth month: History of English literature in the nineteenth century, two weeks

Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalott* and *Oenone*, Browning's *An Incident of the French Camp*, and *Hervé Riel*, Arnold's *The Forsaken Merman*, Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel*, Morris' *Atalanta's Race*, Noyes' *The Highwayman*, two weeks

ONE HUNDRED NOVELS FOR HOME READING

Teachers have constant use for representative fiction lists. Many of the novels in the following list are established classics and the recent books are generally recognized as having enduring merits. The list comprises work by more than eighty different writers. Not more than two books are listed by any one writer. An attempt has been made to list the books in the order of their adaptability to immature readers. This classification does not purport to be truly scientific, but it is the result of prolonged and extensive inquiries among large numbers of teachers and pupils. The belief is entertained that the order of the earlier books will in a general way accord with the opinions of experienced teachers and that this order will be useful to inexperienced teachers. For instance, a teacher should discourage pupils from reading books with high numbers until they have read widely among the books with lower numbers. Every large high school has some bright pupils who are capable of reading every book in the list with eager appetite. The members of the Methods class should familiarize themselves as early as possible with all the books in the first half of the list.

1. *Robinson Crusoe,* Daniel Defoe
2. *The King of the Golden River,* John Ruskin
3. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* Charles Lutwidge Dodgson
4. *Swiss Family Robinson* (translated), Johann Wyss
5. *The Hoosier Schoolmaster,* Edward Eggleston
6. *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm,* Kate Douglas Wiggin
7. *Adventures of Tom Sawyer,* Samuel Langhorne Clemens
8. *Undine* (translated), Fouqué

9. *The Man Without a Country,* Edward Everett Hale
10. *Gulliver's Travels,* Jonathan Swift
11. *Treasure Island,* Robert Louis Stevenson
12. *The Call of the Wild,* Jack London
13. *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* Harriet Beecher Stowe
14. *Ramona,* Helen Hunt Jackson
15. *The Spy,* James Fenimore Cooper
16. *The Deerslayer,* James Fenimore Cooper
17. *Captains Courageous,* Rudyard Kipling
18. *Little Women,* Louisa May Alcott
19. *Huckleberry Finn,* Samuel Langhorne Clemens
20. *Emmy Lou,* George Madden Martin
21. *Seventeen,* Booth Tarkington
22. *Mr. Midshipman Easy,* Frederick Marryat
23. *Kidnapped,* Robert Louis Stevenson
24. *The Scottish Chiefs,* Jane Porter
25. *John Halifax, Gentleman,* Dinah Mulock Craik
26. *Jane Eyre,* Charlotte Brontë
27. *Tom Brown's School Days,* Thomas Hughes
28. *The Three Musketeers* (translated), Alexandre Dumas
29. *The Crisis,* Winston Churchill
30. *The Red Badge of Courage,* Stephen Crane
31. *The Count of Monte-Cristo* (translated), Alexandre Dumas
32. *Ben Hur: a Tale of the Christ,* Lewis Wallace
33. *Penrod,* Booth Tarkington
34. *Oliver Twist,* Charles Dickens
35. *The Talisman,* Walter Scott
36. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles,* Thomas Hardy
37. *Lorna Doone: a Romance of Exmoor,* Richard Doddridge Blackmore
38. *David Copperfield,* Charles Dickens
39. *The Casting Away of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine,* Frank Stockton
40. *Harold,* Edward Bulwer Lytton

41. *Jennie Gerhardt,* Theodore Dreiser
42. *The Scarlet Letter,* Nathaniel Hawthorne
43. *The Little Minister,* James Matthew Barrie
44. *The Rise of Silas Lapham,* William Dean Howells
45. *Westward Ho!,* Charles Kingsley
46. *The Eldest Son,* Archibald Marshall
47. *The Last Days of Pompeii,* Edward Bulwer Lytton
48. *The Mill on the Floss,* George Eliot
49. *The Vicar of Wakefield,* Oliver Goldsmith
50. *Vanity Fair,* William Makepeace Thackeray
51. *The Plum Tree,* David Graham Phillips
52. *The Heart of Midlothian,* Walter Scott
53. *Erewhon,* Samuel Butler
54. *The Bridge of San Luis Rey,* Thornton Wilder
55. *My Antonia,* Willa Cather
56. *Anna Karenina* (translated), Tolstoi
57. *Adam Bede,* George Eliot
58. *The Cloister and the Hearth,* Charles Reade
59. *Pride and Prejudice,* Jane Austen
60. *Cranford,* Elizabeth Gaskell
61. *The Jungle,* Upton Sinclair
62. *The Grandissimes,* George Washington Cable
63. *The Man of Property,* John Galsworthy
64. *Barchester Towers,* Anthony Trollope
65. *Les Misérables* (translated), Victor Hugo
66. *Sentimental Tommy,* James Matthew Barrie
67. *The Return of the Native,* Thomas Hardy
68. *The American,* Henry James
69. *Tono Bungay,* H. G. Wells
70. *Sons and Lovers,* D. H. Lawrence
71. *Ethan Frome,* Edith Wharton
72. *The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck,* James Branch Cabell
73. *Moby Dick,* Herman Melville
74. *Quo Vadis* (translated), Sienkiewicz
75. *Henry Esmond,* William Makepeace Thackeray

76. *Tom Jones,* Henry Fielding
77. *Cashel Byron's Profession,* George Bernard Shaw
78. *The Way of All Flesh,* Samuel Butler
79. *The Resurrection,* Tolstoi
80. *Wuthering Heights,* Emily Brontë
81. *Green Mansions,* W. H. Hudson
82. *Manon Lescaut* (translated), Prévost
83. *Pepita Jiménez* (translated), Valera
84. *Under Western Eyes,* Joseph Conrad
85. *Lord Jim,* Joseph Conrad
86. *Born in Exile,* George Gissing
87. *The Old Wives' Tale,* Arnold Bennett
88. *Joseph Vance,* William De Morgan
89. *Rhoda Fleming,* George Meredith
90. *The Egoist,* George Meredith
91. *Eugénie Grandet* (translated), Balzac
92. *A Nest of Nobles* (translated), Turgenieff
93. *Doña Perfecta* (translated), Galdós
94. *The Betrothed Lovers* (translated), Alessandro Manzoni
95. *The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard* (translated), Anatole France
96. *John Inglesant,* Joseph Henry Shorthouse
97. *The Saint,* Antonio Fogazzaro
98. *Madame Bovary* (translated), Flaubert
99. *Don Quixote* (translated), Cervantes
100. *The Brothers Karamazov* (translated), Dostoyevsky

ONE HUNDRED SHORT STORIES BY SIXTY AUTHORS

The short story affords a particularly tempting field for experiments. Extreme brevity and intense focus of interest make possible extensive class discussion and give exceptional opportunity for judging student reaction. At times teach-

ers will find it profitable to condense the teaching of certain standardized classics and to give the day or two thus saved to a short story. Short stories, like dramas and novels, have the advantage that they are nearly as good in translation as they are in the original. There are various ways of checking on the home reading of short stories. Some teachers have found it satisfactory to assign a class one short story from each of six or eight library volumes, to allow two or three weeks for the reading of these stories, and then to give the entire class a short-answer written test on the material. The brevity of the assignment in each volume or collection of stories prevents difficulty in getting the use of the library books.

1. *Peter Rugg, the Missing Man,* William Austin
2. *Rip Van Winkle,* Irving
3. *The Spectre Bridegroom,* Irving
4. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,* Irving
5. *The Adventure of My Aunt,* Irving
6. *The Gray Champion,* Hawthorne
7. *Howe's Masquerade,* Hawthorne
8. *Lady Eleanore's Mantle,* Hawthorne
9. *David Swan,* Hawthorne
10. *A Descent Into the Maelstrom,* Poe
11. *The Purloined Letter,* Poe
12. *The Fall of the House of Usher,* Poe
13. *Eleanora,* Poe
14. *The Luck of Roaring Camp,* Bret Harte
15. *Tennessee's Partner,* Bret Harte
16. *The Outcasts of Poker Flat,* Bret Harte
17. *The Idyll of Red Gulch,* Bret Harte
18. *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,* Clemens
19. *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg,* Clemens

20. *The Town-Ho's Story* from *Moby Dick*, Melville
21. *Jean-ah-Poquelin*, Cable
22. *Madame Delphine*, Cable
23. *My Double and How He Undid Me*, Hale
24. *Marjory Daw*, Aldrich
25. *Just So*, Aldrich
26. *Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox, and the Tar Baby*, Harris
27. *Marse Chan*, Thomas Nelson Page
28. *The Lady or the Tiger*, Stockton
29. *His Wife's Deceased Sister*, Stockton
30. *The Transferred Ghost*, Stockton
31. *A New England Nun*, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman
32. *The Revolt of Mother*, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman
33. *The Mission of Jane*, Edith Wharton
34. *The Liar*, Henry James
35. *A Horseman in the Sky*, Bierce
36. *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*, Bierce
37. *Nice People*, Bunner
38. *Gallegher*, Richard Harding Davis
39. *The Duplicity of Hargraves*, O. Henry
40. *The Trimmed Lamp*, O. Henry
41. *An Unfinished Story*, O. Henry
42. *A Municipal Report*, O. Henry
43. *The Lost Phoebe*, Dreiser
44. *The Apparition of Mrs. Veal*, Defoe
45. *The Voyage to Lilliput*, Swift
46. *The Vision of Mirza*, Addison
47. *Barbara S.*, Charles Lamb
48. *Dream Children*, Charles Lamb
49. *Wandering Willie's Tale*, Scott
50. *The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton*, George Eliot
51. *Rab and His Friends*, Brown
52. *Will o' the Mill*, Stevenson
53. *Sire de Maletroit's Door*, Stevenson

54. *Markheim*, Stevenson
55. *A Lodging for the Night*, Stevenson
56. *The Haunted and the Haunters*, Bulwer-Lytton
57. *The Dream of John Ball*, Morris
58. *Without Benefit of Clergy*, Kipling
59. *The Rout of the White Hussars*, Kipling
60. *Wee Willie Winkie*, Kipling
61. *The Courting of Dinah Shadd*, Kipling
62. *The King is Dead; Long Live the King*, Mary Coleridge
63. *The Three Strangers*, Hardy
64. *The Inconsiderate Waiter*, Barrie
65. *A Tillyloss Scandal*, Barrie
66. *The Blue Cross*, Chesterton
67. *The Monkey's Paw*, Jacobs
68. *The Garden Party*, Katherine Mansfield
69. *Her First Ball*, Katherine Mansfield
70. *The Country of the Blind*, Wells
71. *A Scandal in Bohemia*, Doyle
72. *Cupid and Psyche*, Greek myths
73. *Joseph and His Brethren*, Bible
74. *Tristram and Iseult*, Mediaeval myths
75. *Aladdin's Lamp, The Arabian Nights*
76. *The Shot*, Pushkin
77. *The Cloak*, Gogol
78. *Mumu*, Turgenieff
79. *Ermolai and the Miller's Wife*, Turgenieff
80. *A Gentle Spirit*, Dostoyevsky
81. *Three Arshins of Land*, Tolstoi
82. *What Men Live By*, Tolstoi
83. *The Schoolmaster*, Chekhov
84. *The Story of Griselda*, Boccaccio
85. *The Father*, Björnson
86. *The Silver Mine*, Lagerlöf
87. *An Episode in the Time of the Terror*, Balzac
88. *An Atheist's Mass*, Balzac

89. *Mateo Falcone,* Mérimée
90. *The Venus of Ille,* Mérimée
91. *The Taking of the Redoubt,* Mérimée
92. *A Simple Soul,* Flaubert
93. *The Necklace,* Maupassant
94. *The Coward,* Maupassant
95. *A Piece of String,* Maupassant
96. *The Last Lesson,* Daudet
97. *The Siege of Berlin,* Daudet
98. *A Piece of Bread,* Coppée
99. *The Substitute,* Coppée
100. *Crainquebille* or *The Majesty of Justice,* Anatole France

MODERN DRAMAS FOR HOME READING OF SENIORS

High school juniors and seniors of special ability derive great pleasure from reading modern plays. Their home reading should be partly in this field. The forty plays here listed have been selected because they are entertaining and because they have enduring values. Some of the plays lead to consideration of pressing social problems. All modern views of criminology and penology are suggested by Galsworthy's *Justice.* The teacher may test mastery through short objective questions, either oral or written. For instance, a teacher could be satisfied as to a student's reading of *Justice* if this question, being unforeseen, is answered in a satisfactory manner: "Give the specific reason why each of Falder's close relatives failed to visit him during the imprisonment." A little sympathetic encouragement will lead seniors who have a natural appetite for reading to become familiar with a large number of the plays.

1. *The Pillars of Society,* Ibsen
2. *Ghosts,* Ibsen
3. *A Doll's House,* Ibsen
4. *The Great Galeoto,* Echegaray
5. *The Sea Gull,* Chekhov
6. *The Torch Race,* Hervieu
7. *The Gauntlet,* Björnson
8. *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray,* Pinero
9. *The Girl with the Green Eyes,* Clyde Fitch
10. *Lady Windermere's Fan,* Wilde
11. *The Father,* Strindberg
12. *Cyrano de Bergerac,* Rostand
13. *Riders to the Sea,* Synge
14. *The Voysey Inheritance,* Barker
15. *Magda* or *Heimat,* Sudermann
16. *Rose Bernd,* Hauptmann
17. *Pelléas and Mélisande,* Maeterlinck
18. *Monna Vanna,* Maeterlinck
19. *Candida,* Shaw
20. *The Devil's Disciple,* Shaw
21. *The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont,* Brieux
22. *The Red Robe,* Brieux
23. *He Who Gets Slapped,* Andreyev
24. *Gioconda,* D'Annunzio
25. *The Land of Heart's Desire,* Yeats
26. *The Admirable Crichton,* Barrie
27. *What Every Woman Knows,* Barrie
28. *Quality Street,* Barrie
29. *Justice,* Galsworthy
30. *The Eldest Son,* Galsworthy
31. *The Silver Box,* Galsworthy
32. *A Bill of Divorcement,* Clemence Dane
33. *Inheritors,* Susan Glaspell
34. *The Tragedy of Nan,* Masefield
35. *John Ferguson,* St. John Ervine

36. *The Tents of the Arabs,* Lord Dunsany
37. *The Lucky One,* Milne
38. *The Show-Off,* George Kelly
39. *Anna Christie,* Eugene O'Neill
40. *Marco Millions,* Eugene O'Neill

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Obtain for the normal school or teachers' college library copies of six or eight rhetoric texts used by high schools in the larger towns or cities of the state. Group the texts in three or four groups of two texts each. Let each member of the Methods class compare two texts. Let these questions be considered:

   (*a*) Which of the two texts has the more satisfactory grammar summary ?
   (*b*) Which of the two texts has the more interesting composition subjects ?
   (*c*) Which of the two texts has the better exercises for drill on common errors ?
   (*d*) What other comparisons are suggested by the discussion concerning texts on pages 15–16 ?

2. In what grade should instruction be given as to the best method of reading a daily newspaper ?
3. Practical English includes these topics among many others: sentence structure; oral composition; written composition; dictation exercises for teaching punctuation; punctuation rules; spelling; capitalization; vocabulary mastery; outlining and organization. Which of these topics should have a larger stress in the junior high school than in the senior high school because habit formation is involved ?
4. Let two members of the Methods class secure from five high

schools copies of the school paper, compare the five, and report findings to the Methods class. Consider these questions:

(*a*) Which of the five papers would be most popular with high school pupils and most eagerly sought when hot from the press ?

(*b*) Which of the papers does most to cultivate original writing by high school students ?

(*c*) Is the interest of any one of the papers purchased by indulgence in personalities or by loss of dignity ?

(*d*) Which of the papers would be the best model for use by a beginning English teacher who is required to supervise the school paper as an extra-curricular activity ?

5. Let two members of the Methods class who have had some experience in teaching and who are familiar with a considerable number of high school classics make a special study of the College Entrance Requirements. These requirements are published by most of the book companies. These questions should be considered:

(*a*) With what purposes are the classics arranged in groups ?

(*b*) From each group name some classics which in your opinion are eminently suitable ?

(*c*) What classics are suited only to very able high school students?

6. Obtain from the State Departments of all states bordering on your own the English course of study. Let four or five members of the Methods class look over these courses and report to the class which courses are most helpful. These questions should be considered:

(*a*) Which course gives the most helpful directions about handling practical English work ?

(*b*) Which course gives the most stimulating subjects for oral and written composition ?

(*c*) How far do the courses attempt a division of time among the different phases of the work ?

7. Why should instruction in keeping the minutes of a parliamentary body be placed rather late in the high school course ?
8. Explain why enlargement of vocabulary is a part both of practical English and of literature.
9. Which two of the five principles for selecting classics have the same applicability to home reading books that these principles have to the selection of books for class study ?
10. Some sources of interest which a teacher may utilize in the selection and teaching of literature are suspense arising from conflict or danger, the interest of the ego (the student's family, the student's hopes, the student's future), the concrete, the pathetic, the humorous, the horrible. In connection with which of these sources of interest is it necessary to exercise especially good judgment ?
11. By which one of the five principles of selecting classics does *Macbeth* have for high school students a slight advantage over *Hamlet* ?

CHAPTER II

THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT IN LITERATURE TEACHING

Although literature is often taught admirably, it has in some instances been subjected to singularly unfortunate class room treatment. The first obligation of the teacher is to understand and feel any masterpiece that he teaches as it was understood and felt by the creative writer. The work of the literature teacher is to clarify the main design of the masterpiece, to present suggestions and implications that contribute to the main design, and to aid students in interpreting situations, attitudes, thought, and conduct depicted in literature in the light of their own similar personal experiences. If these ends can be accomplished, artistic enjoyment is the sure result.

28. **Absurd misconceptions.** — Only omniscience could divine the various methods by which literature has been taught or could conjecture why methods so singular have been used. It would be hard to guess why a teacher should expect a class to diagram *L'Allegro* or to marshal and review nouns in an assignment from *The Lady of the Lake*. What could have been the motive of another teacher who required her class to make an exhaustive search for subjunctives in *The Merchant of Venice*? The relative rarity of the article sought must explain the eager hunt occasionally made for figures of speech in *Ivanhoe* and *Silas Marner*. A desire to amuse at any price is the only purpose that one can assign to the teacher who required that whole scenes from *Macbeth* be translated into modern slang. Even

more remarkable offences have been committed in the name of literature teaching by teachers deficient in education or in literary feeling. An English teacher in a city high school was heard by a visiting teacher to reprove her class in the words, "Class, class! This is not studying *Julius Caesar* as Shakespeare intended we should study it." Poor Shakespeare! No less fatuity is shown by those teachers who have asked students to write a paraphrase of the perfect *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Again, one might have supposed that the craving for a moral, a peculiar obsession of the American mind, would be sufficiently appeased by teaching the obviously didactic, such as *The Psalm of Life* or *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. Alas! *Tam o' Shanter* has been turned into a temperance lesson. The annals of the school room could reveal painstaking formulation of a moral for *The Fall of the House of Usher* and a moral for *The Eve of St. Agnes*. Even *The Raven* has been interpreted as an allegory. A country youth who had just completed an intelligent study of *Treasure Island* in a normal school shed a flood of light on the moralizing tendency of teachers by an inquiry equally felicitous in phrasing and in idea, "Teacher, you ain't yet give us ary moral to *Treasure Island*."

29. **The true approach.** — Such enormities as these that have been mentioned together with some slighter follies explain why we hear occasional protests against the very idea of teaching literature. Not only laymen but teachers of various subjects have naturally been led to confuse any detailed study with what is commonly denominated "dissecting" or "picking literature to pieces." In one sense, indeed,

those who deny that literature can be taught are entirely correct. Literature has no content which can be taught apart from the expression by Shakespeare or Milton or Dickens or Tennyson; in this respect it is altogether different from history or psychology or physics. The rôle of the literature teacher is to bring the pupil into contact with a particular masterpiece and to aid him in seeing the design of the masterpiece. That this aid may be of the greatest value is witnessed by thousands of high school students and graduates. They testify that class room teaching has illuminated many a play and many a poem which might have remained as far as they are concerned altogether hopeless and insoluble riddles.[1]

How then should the teacher proceed to give aid in sympathetic interpretation? First of all, he must strive to make his own personality a happy medium.[2] He must not belong to that class of teachers who arouse an antagonistic attitude, whose very admiration for a poem is enough to cause their pupils to dislike it. People who cannot avoid awakening such antipathies should not undertake to teach the subject in which pleasant associations are of the greatest moment. Many a teacher, however, can gradually develop congeniality with young people, while at the same time he properly scorns a cheap popularity. Moreover, as a mediator between author and student, the teacher must be in constant and close touch with the disembodied spirits whose

[1] Excellent proof that students like a book better if they study it in class than if they read it outside is offered by Morris B. Sanford, "Reforming the Study of English," *English Journal*, XIII, 200–205.

[2] Some interesting statements by distinguished people concerning the personality needed by a literature teacher are quoted by J. W. Searson, "Determining a Language Program," *English Journal*, XIII, 111–113.

life he is to communicate. He must cultivate a wide range of taste for books and, like Charles Lamb, have no repugnances. He should take pleasure equally in the hair-breadth escapes of the Leather-Stocking tales and in the old-maidish habits of the Cranford ladies. He should cherish Sam Weller and Henry Esmond as close friends. He should smack his lips over the irony of Anatole France but should not curl them in scorn at the sentiment of Barrie. Just as the religious leader who would affect others must know religion as a personal experience, so the teacher who would lead others to the enjoyment of literature must himself find it a perpetual feast of nectared sweets. Finally, if the teacher is to be a happy medium, he must not depend mainly on his personal magnetism or on his general interest in all real literature. He must feel the most intense emotion in connection with each particular classic. He ought not to rely on the pleasure of his former reading but ought to take time to recreate within himself the original inspiration. He can have only a dead recitation if he trusts in the effect of his previous analysis. He will be like the preacher who, reading an old sermon, fails to stir his audience because he himself is not stirred. The emotional ardor with which the teacher is afire tends to fuse the life of the student with the life portrayed in the literary selection.

In class work, however, the teacher must never permit the ultimate aim of appreciation to be emphasized. Paradoxical though the statement may seem, he must hide or suppress his own literary enjoyment. He must not openly express his admiration. He must reserve the power inherent in enthusiasm controlled and restrained. The point of view must

be that he is teaching his class to interpret the thought and not to enjoy or admire. A mistake which is characteristic of young and inexperienced teachers is to encourage premature expression of opinion. For instance, Miss Smith, a novice, permits John, who has read three *De Coverley* papers, to waste a considerable part of the period pronouncing upon them an unfavorable judgment. She betrays concern or even pain because Mary, after reading four chapters of *Ivanhoe,* declares the book not interesting and not worthy of being included in a high school course. Mary, much elated by the discovery that her literary criticism has so disturbing an effect, is hardly likely to reconsider her dictum. Thus the class management, failing to preserve the natural and beautiful humility of youth, is responsible for an egotistical and unreceptive attitude. The results are different but not less unfortunate in those cases where a very magnetic and skillful teacher is in a hurry to secure appreciation. If he asks the question, "How many like this poem ?" he is positively tempting amiable and flexible young people to be insincere. The desire for his approbation or even the base motive of a higher mark may call forth fluent eulogies of the rhetoric of Burke or the poetical suggestiveness of Wordsworth. Accordingly an influential teacher may take upon himself the dark guilt of turning ingenuous youngsters into hypocrites and dilettantes. All such mistakes arise from the misapplication of the fundamental truth that the purpose of literature is to afford enjoyment. The teacher will not misapply this fundamental truth if he remembers that familiarity with any classic must precede pleasure or at least go hand in hand with pleasure; that class time must be

conserved for acquiring this intimate knowledge; that there are immeasurably better ways of watching emotional response than through listening to loose expression of opinions early in the game.

The importance of exact understanding on the part of both teacher and students is connected with the fact that literary interpretation is not, as many people suppose, a matter of perplexity or uncertainty. A few singular exceptions do not invalidate this general truth. There are perhaps a very few literary puzzles. We may never be absolutely sure whether Shakespeare meant us to understand Hamlet's difficulties as temperamental and subjective or as external and objective. But such ambiguity is exceedingly rare. Intelligent students are nearly always in substantial agreement as to the meaning intended by a literary genius. In teaching we must be on our guard against the vague notion that a poem can properly mean one thing to one person and something else to another. Here we have no right to apply the often quoted line of Tennyson, "Truth is this to me and that to thee." There is no objection, of course, when time can be spared, to discussion of opinions divergent from those in the selection studied, but these opinions must not be erroneously ascribed to the writer of the selection. It is a far more grievous sin in literary interpretation to assign a meaning that was not intended by the author than it is to overlook some exquisite shade of meaning that he desired to suggest. A sadly frequent illustration of misconception and distortion by English teachers consists in attaching a symbolical meaning to the long and beautiful description of the Oxus River near the close of Arnold's *Sohrab and Rus-*

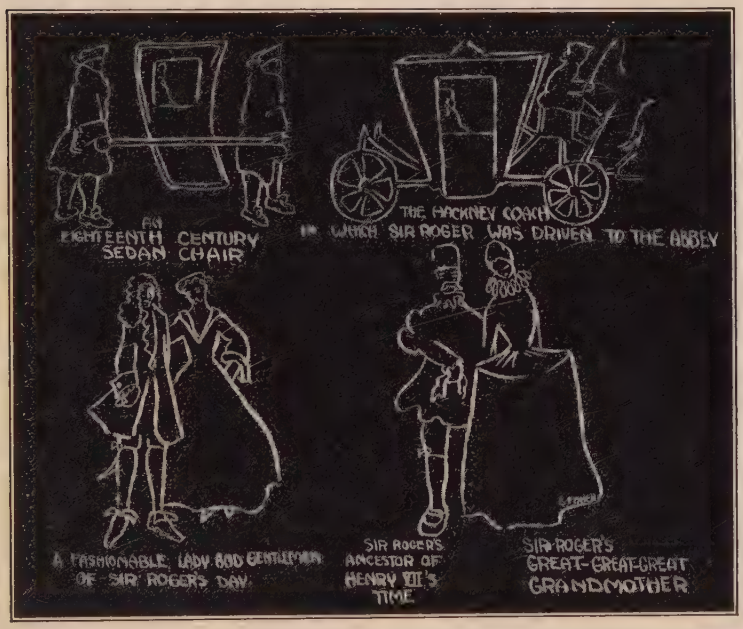
tum. The literature teacher must consistently strive for the impression and view designed by the author studied.

30. **Emphasis of major narrative interests.** — The problem of awakening appreciation is solved only by mastering the classic with an emphasis always proportioned to the natural order of interests. In the reading of narrative any normal person finds his first strong interest in the suspense of plot. Scheherazade in *The Arabian Nights* was able to save her life because she kept the tyrannical Sultan in a state of feverish curiosity as to what would happen next in the stories that she was nightly narrating to him. The tale of Little Red Riding Hood is immortal because succeeding generations of children will listen with bated breath to know whether she will escape the crafty wolf. Thus it is essential that the class follow and grasp the plot with absolute clearness. If we are teaching *Ivanhoe* to students who have read little, we may need to have them review the plot from the beginning many times. We must remember that immature readers are in danger of feeling that they cannot see the town for the houses. When the pupil has read *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* he must be able to tell the story: that the ship had sailed south from northern England; that after passing the equator she was driven by a storm to the South Pole and was locked in the icebergs; that an albatross visited the ship for nine days and brought release from the icebergs; that the mariner wantonly shot the albatross; that the other sailors by approving the deed became accomplices; that going north around Cape Horn, the ship reached the equatorial regions of the Pacific; that tortured by heat and thirst, the seamen had had a strange

vision of a phantom ship and a weird game of dice; that the outcome of the game resulted in the death of all the seamen except the mariner who is the teller of the tale; that the mariner, becoming penitent, had known the relief of prayer and sleep; that by supernatural power the ship was brought back to the Atlantic Ocean; that the mariner was rescued to endure a life-long expiation. Similarly, in any narrative poem or any novel or any play, the primary requisite is mastery of the general movement.

Details of narration can safely receive attention whenever they are a part of the general movement and whenever they intensify the dominant purpose of the classic. Condensation, repression, and restraint are peculiarly characteristic of great literature. Hence, even a simple narrative such as *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is replete with deeply significant implications that the average student may lose. The average student, unaided, will miss the fact that the mediaeval sailor was not familiar with the mariner's compass and accordingly was forced to give directions by the position of the sun. He will not perceive that the intensity of the suffering from the heat and thirst made it a physical impossibility for the sailor to speak until after he had sucked blood from his arm. He may even fail to observe the spasms of remorseful agony that wrenched the mariner's whole frame and that are suggested by the exclamations of the horrified wedding guest. He may even fail to connect the appalling appearance of the returning mariner with the permanent insanity of the pilot's boy. The teacher cannot afford to neglect any such details as these which contribute to the heightening of the main story.

31. **Pictures and characterization.** — Directly related to the fundamental interest of the main story is the interest of the picturesque and the concrete. Arnold's poem, *Sohrab and Rustum,* becomes thrilling if the pupils see the two


AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SEDAN CHAIR
THE HACKNEY COACH IN WHICH SIR ROGER WAS DRIVEN TO THE ABBEY
A FASHIONABLE LADY AND GENTLEMAN OF SIR ROGER'S DAY
SIR ROGER'S ANCESTOR OF HENRY VII'S TIME
SIR ROGER'S GREAT-GREAT-GREAT GRANDMOTHER

Sir Roger de Coverley Blackboard Drawings

The drawings show conveyances and correct dress of Sir Roger's day and also costumes observed by the Spectator in the gallery of portraits.

vast armies facing each other and stretching away in never-ending line and between the waiting multitudes the Herculean figure of Rustum and the slender form of Sohrab. The attachment of strong friendship is really understood if the student of *The Merchant of Venice* watches Antonio

wringing the hand of his departing friend and at the same time turning his face away to hide his emotion. The expert teacher of literature will utilize innumerable devices for securing vividness. He will make crude drawings on the blackboard when such drawings add clearness. He will sometimes freely dramatize action and gesture. He will accumulate for class room use pictures showing Elizabethan or eighteenth century costumes and social life.

Only after we are sure that the class are following the narrative as a moving panorama, can we afford to emphasize the deeper interest of character. If they visualize distinctly the physical movement, and we enlarge understanding by our development of character manifestations in dialogue, of character contrast, of the influence exerted by one character on another, and of character as the origin of destiny and plot. The training in psychology through literary interpretation of character is invaluable. It gives an understanding of the motives by which different sorts of men are governed. The world is less bewildering to the young person who is familiar with dozens of literary creations. Rosalind and Jaques, Bassanio and Shylock, Brutus and Cassius, afford the student a commentary on the people whom he daily meets. Though subordinate to plot, character can be given liberal treatment by the English teacher.

32. **Emphasis in exposition and argument.** — Mastery with emphasis always proportioned to the natural order of interests is the way to appreciation of all other literary types. Teaching literature without the feeling for artistic proportion is like attempting to paint without a knowledge of perspective. In the case of an essay or an oration the first con-

sideration must be the large design, the main ideas by which the dominant purpose is attained. If the relation of paragraph groups is constantly reviewed and the progress from thought to thought is clarified, the students will understand the outline before it has been formulated. They will not then view the formulation of the outline as an ingenious scheme intended to rob an essay of whatever interest it may have but will recognize that the outline reënforces the organization which they have already mastered.[3]

33. **Consideration of rhetorical effectiveness.** — If in teaching any type of prose our subordination and proportion are true, we have endless opportunities further to enhance appreciation by consideration of rhetorical effectiveness. For instance, if the plot movement and characters in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* are clearly grasped, the sketch serves to illustrate many principles of interesting writing: unity of tone conferred by the dreamy, drowsy, superstitious atmosphere; the value of the specific, the concrete, and the suggestive; the appeal that may be made to various senses; clear point of view; the effect of motion words; humor arising from incongruity. Similarly, Hawthorne's story, *The Ambitious Guest,* serves to illustrate various principles of story construction: unity of incident with one culmination; the dominance of one character; limitation of time to a few hours; limitation of place; underlying idea of the irony of fate. If in reading an admirable essay or oration, the student grasps the large analysis, he will feel increased pleasure as he perceives the many specific means by which the artistic writer has attained certain effects. Indeed, the study of a

[3] For illustrative essay outline, see pages 111–114.

forceful essay or speech is the natural way to secure an understanding of paragraph grouping, of paragraph topics, and of paragraph architecture. It is the true way to secure an understanding of the logical modes of expository development: division; definition; proof; example; contrast; comparison; concession; restatement.

34. **Emphasis in teaching poetry.** — In poetry, likewise, the largest interest must have the primary place. In teaching reflective poetry we should make some sort of broad analysis. For instance, in Gray's *Elegy* we must see that our pupils note and retain the succession of ideas: the coming on of dusk in Stoke Poges Churchyard; the contrast between the profound sleep of death and the cheerful work-day activities of the field and of the rustic home; the equality of all human souls in the grave; the possible achievements of the obscure villagers, had time and chance been favorable; the quiet worth of simple lives; the universality of the desire to be remembered; Gray's own life as a type of the obscure lot. Such a large analysis will sometimes enable our students to perceive the truth that Coleridge learned at Christ's Hospital, "that poetry, even that of the loftiest and seemingly that of the wildest odes, has a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult because more subtle, more complex and dependent on more and more fugitive causes."[4]

In lyric poetry the goal is a clear perception of a situation which inspired the poem and the creation within ourselves of the poet's feeling. Deep enjoyment can come only from imagining with absolute distinctness the situation of

[4] *Biographia Literaria*, I.

the poem so that for the time we live the life of the poet. We are truly teaching Wordsworth's *The Solitary Reaper* if our students see on the hillside a lonely Scotch girl wielding her sickle and if they really hear her full song, quivering with beauty and sadness. It is our part to keep the thought on this rich pathetic song, while our students suggest the possible subjects of her song, perhaps a lament for Flodden Field or Culloden, battles of the long-ago, perhaps the humble lay of one who yearns for the touch of a vanished hand or the sound of a voice that is still. Only if our students enter into all the suggestions of the poet's vague feelings, will they listen motionless and absorbed and carry away the unforgettable beauty to glorify prosaic living. Only if our students share the humble adoration of Shelley's "One word is too often profaned" and the passionate love of Burns' "O my love is like a red, red rose," will they feel profound gratitude to the poet who expresses in permanent form the noblest moments of life.[5]

The teaching of figurative language must be subordinate to the main interest and the dominant feeling. We must never talk too much about metaphors or metonymies or any other technical terms. We fail entirely in teaching poetry if our students do not feel poetic language as the spontaneous inspiration from a poetic glimpse. They must perceive that Wordsworth cannot express his joy in the reaper's song except by describing the delight of tired travelers who hear a sudden burst of melody from the secluded nightingale.

[5] A charming illustration, helpful in showing students the use and character of poetry, is *Les Mots Perdus* by Catulle Mendès. The story translated under the title *The Lost Words of Love* is found in Konrad Bercovici, *Best Short Stories of the World* (Boston: The Stratford Company, 1925).

They must recognize that he cannot show the thrilling effect of the reaper's song except by describing the piercing power of the cuckoo's notes on the loneliest of shores. They must discover in the rhythmical and imaginative language the inevitable and final expression of the poet's mood.[6]

VI. FUNDAMENTALS OF METHOD

In teaching literature a variety of methods may be used. Questioning, however, is the typical procedure. The making of ideal questions is a fine art dependent upon true interpretation, careful study, and long experience. Other methods that may be occasionally valuable are discussion by the teacher, narration by the class, topical reproduction by the class, personally assigned and carefully prepared oral reading, class dramatizing, collecting such literary material as will necessitate contact with a wide range of books and authors, and memorizing.

35. **The question method.** — Recognizing the aim of mastering a literary selection with grasp of design and proportions, how shall we regularly proceed in class? Ordinarily we should teach literature through skillful handling of the two chief types of questions, study questions and development questions. The former type includes those questions which are intended to aid in getting the exact thought of the author. To illustrate, the first short scene in the second act of *The Merchant of Venice* would be adequately comprehended in these questions:

(1) What three apologies does Morocco offer for his dark complexion?

(2) How does Portia show her tact in avoiding offence and yet not telling a lie?

[6] In connection with the matter of rhythm see page 114 for a simple method of teaching versification.

(3) Of what ability does Morocco boast ?
(4) What mythological comparison does he use ?
(5) What requirement preliminary to choosing the caskets is mentioned by Portia ?

Such questions may either be given in the assignment or be propounded for the first time in the recitation after the general assignment that the scene be studied. In either case their purpose is to lead to careful reading of the text. Such questions may also be called preparation questions. Since preparation questions are designed to test faithful study, they should be distributed indiscriminately among the different members of the class and should not be given especially to those who raise their hands or in some other way volunteer to recite.[7]

The merit of such questions may be judged by quite definite principles. In the first place, the answers to the questions must comprehend all important ideas in the text. In the second place, the questions must give the right emphasis and must lead the student to see the large values. They must aid in keeping the plot of a story as clear, as real, and as vivid as moving pictures. They must make prominent the primary and fundamental sources of interest. They must suggest proportions. A third requirement of study questions is a corollary from the second requirement: the number of such questions must not be very large.[8] It is apparent that if very many of these questions are based on

[7] For suggestions as to a way of distributing questions, see Chapter VIII, p. 352.

[8] Romiett Stevens, *The Question as a Measure of Efficiency in Instruction* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1912), p. 71, says "A large number of questions is an indisputable index of bad teaching (except in some modern language and developmental lessons)."

a short passage, proportions will not be suggested. Besides, fewer questions necessitate more elaborate and comprehensive answers and mean greater gain in oral expression. Finally, the questions should be as definite and as interesting as may be possible in compatibility with other aims. Instead of such a vague question as "What did he next say ?" it is frequently easy to use a specific one, such as "On what grounds did he complain ?" or "What promises did he make ?" or "How did he explain his failure ?" The teacher should spare no effort but should expend the utmost ingenuity on phrasing that may stimulate curiosity.

Development questions have an altogether different purpose. They must bring into play judgment on implications and compressed meaning and must flash on literature the light of analogous experiences and emotions. To illustrate, the same short scene just used to explain study questions suggests these development questions:

(1) What inference may we draw as to Portia's social presence and bearing ?
(2) Why does the boasting of Morocco seem relatively free from conceit and egotism ?
(3) Why has Portia's father stipulated the vow of celibacy on the part of a suitor who fails to select the right casket ?

Volunteers may answer such questions since the power to answer depends not on preparation, but on native ability and range of knowledge and experience. Obviously, liberal encouragement should be given in order to secure numerous volunteers for development questions.

The first requisite of development questions is that they should lead to necessary and immediate conclusions which

are in perfect harmony with the purpose and the emphasis of the literature. They should not be loose, remote, or speculative. It is true that in rare instances development questions may inspire in babes and sucklings answers wiser than the teacher could give and that then his attitude must be flexible, open-minded, and receptive. Yet ordinarily he is at fault if he has not clearly in mind the goal of his development questions and if he does not foresee the directions in which they are to lead. For instance, the development questions just used for illustration are chosen because the purpose of the scene is to show the graceful tact and sympathy of Portia in the presence of an unwelcome suitor, to reveal the type of character who will later choose the gold casket, a brave, simple, humble gentleman, and to justify the plan of the caskets by proof that only a suitor with an intense love for Portia would wish to make the trial.

The second requisite of development questions is that they should be brought into relation with the student's general thought and experiences. Sometimes this result may be gained by several supplementary questions. Sometimes an artistic teacher must tell enough of his own spiritual autobiography to call forth the needed expression from the class. Sometimes he must divine and suggest personal relations or emotional crises through which the students have probably passed. A brilliant literature teacher was once asked how she maintained interest when the spring weather was causing general languor. She answered that she made her literature class an experience meeting: in other words, that she intensified the appreciation of literary emotions by giving

more time to personal emotions. The skillful teacher must develop the power to make students communicative about their inner life and at the same time he must never infringe in any forced way on native reticence. It is his task so to use suggestion that the life history of his pupils illuminates their reading.[9]

Ideal questioning on literature is the result to a certain extent of native power but very largely of painstaking thought. In order to make admirable development questions the teacher needs an intuitive, imaginative understanding of the pupil's knowledge and feeling. He needs also wide range of illustration from present-day life, from current politics, from modern social life and sociology. He can make his questions most effective only if the gods have given him the insight which detects all subtle implications and the originality which lights upon brilliant comparisons. Yet if he feels his ability to be limited, he should not be discouraged. He can plan true study questions and stimulating development questions if he gives the most careful thought to the literary masterpiece as a whole and if he considers the particular assignment in the light of the large design.

36. **The problem of intensive study.** — The difficulty of making and of propounding ideal questions may explain in part the prejudice held by some educators against intensive teaching of literature. The question method just con-

[9] Romiett Stevens, *op. cit.*, p. 64, says, "The field of English is rich in opportunities for judgment questions. It has often seemed to me, as I followed one class after another through a day's activities, that the English hour is the only one during the school day when pupils are ever allowed to have any ideas or judgments of their own. The English lesson is frequently an oasis of thought activity in a desert of fact."

sidered clearly involves extremely intensive teaching. Since a general objection to intensive teaching is likely to be urged, it will be profitable to consider this fundamental problem. The theory that reading of literature should be extensive rather than intensive seems plausible to those who have had limited actual experience in teaching. It is based in part on such personal recollections of too prolonged study as we find expressed in Byron's lines:

> Then farewell, Horace, whom I hated so
> Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
> To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
> To comprehend but never love thy verse.

The theory that reading should be rapid is based in part on the truth that the classics were really written for entertainment and that the mature thinker can get the maximum of pleasure from straight reading with blissful indifference to notes and explanations. The advocates of the theory forget that the mature thinker has at some time in the past learned to interpret mythological and historical allusions. In fact, whatever drawbacks students suffered a century ago, they at least enjoyed one advantage, that having expended laborious study on Latin and Greek, they came to their English reading with adequate equipment and thorough knowledge. They did not need to mar by hard toil the first freshness of literary zest. The advocates of the rapid-reading theory might look on the whole question in a different light if they realized that the typical American high school student is seldom familiar with the connotation of very many words and has heard of hardly half a dozen myths. Per-

haps the advocates of the theory would be less enthusiastic if they knew that their hobby is put into practice in many small weak high schools. An instance was recently reported of a teacher who allowed a high school class to turn through eight Shakespeare plays in three months' time. Observation of results in any such case is enough to convert a thoughtful teacher to the belief that some intensive teaching is desirable.[10] Genuine appreciation is secured by thorough mastery of important passages carefully selected for significant content and by more rapid study of the classic as a whole.

37. **Technical points.** — The prejudice against intensive teaching, in so far as this prejudice is justified, is mainly due to a very common blunder that can easily be avoided. The blunder consists in interspersing questions on technical details and questions arousing emotional interest. All study questions and all development questions which are concerned with the main literary purpose must be kept in immediate sequence, so that by their cumulative force they may kindle imagination and literary feeling. Technical questions of a purely intellectual nature have their place but that place is in a different part of the recitation period. The separation of technical and literary questions is so important that it should usually affect the arrangement in lesson plans made by the teacher of literature.[11]

Any literary passage chosen at random may illustrate such separation. In teaching the second scene of *The Merchant of Venice* we should first of all ask questions that will bring

[10] Cf. Theo. W. H. Irion, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–59.

[11] For sample literature lesson plan, see pages 109–110.

out Portia's humorous pouting, Nerissa's lecture on contentment, and Portia's witty characterization of the suitors so as to suggest national traits, such as the versatility of the Frenchman, the poor taste in dress and the isolation of the Englishman, and the philosophical melancholy of one German and the heavy drinking of another. We inevitably lose the fun and life of the scene if we diverge from our main purpose to ask the meaning of *dumb-show, old as Sibylla, chaste as Diana.* Very frequently details which are a part of the informational background should be considered after the attainment of the large aims.

Likewise no other technical matters may be allowed to interrupt the literary study. If drill on pronouncing the proper names is given before the first work on the classic is begun, literary interest will not be marred by digression for criticism. The teacher should pronounce with extreme distinctness three or four names such as *Odysseus, Phaeacians, Alcinous,* and should request a number of different students to repeat the names. As soon as he has secured from all the students exact pronunciation of these names, he should add other names and should vary the combinations. Though some concert pronunciation is desirable, it should not be a substitute for the testing of individual students. The failure to give a preliminary drill is responsible for mispronunciation, for waste of time in corrections that ought not to have been needed, and for the very unfortunate interruption of the main class discussion. Many teachers tolerate half a dozen variant mispronunciations; a few who wish to make a chance visitor believe that standards are accurate, reduce literary interest by swearing at unlucky

students. It is far better to secure the early formation of a correct habit. In fact, before beginning the study of any book, the teacher should mark all words which are likely to be mispronounced. He should see that the pronunciation of these words is taken care of a day or two before the material in which they appear is to be up for discussion. Blunders in pronunciation must not be allowed to spoil sincere and lively class response or to break the spell of a good class period.

38. **Objections to the lecture method.** — Although questioning is the best typical method of teaching literature, specific ends may be gained by the occasional use of other methods. The lecture method, however, can rarely be advisable. Valuable though the lecture method may be in college, it is not suited to the high school age. Restless high school students must have some opportunity for reaction. Carlyle says, "To sit as a passive bucket and be pumped into whether you consent or not, can in the long run be exhilarating to no creature; how eloquent soever the flood of utterance that is descending." Another objection to the lecture method is that it fails to make the connection between pupil and masterpiece. It is not likely to lead to a close true reading of the literature. The lecture method is unsatisfactory because it does not cause the student to acquire the intimate knowledge essential to appreciation. Fully recognizing the objections to this method of teaching literature, without inconsistency we may concede the benefit to be sometimes derived from a lantern lecture giving views of authors' homes or of other literary shrines.

39. **Narration by the class.** — Among the various minor

ways of teaching literature a second method is class narration. The procedure consists in teaching a class to tell the story with little or no assistance and thus to keep prominent the thread of the plot. For instance, if the assignment for the day consists of three chapters in *The Last of the Mohicans,* some member of the class may start the work by giving the scene and the first incident. If time admits, conversations and descriptions should be given in detail. Other members of the class may be called on to continue the story at any unexpected point. If absolutely essential matters are omitted, or the true thread of the story is lost, the necessary corrections and additions must be made. Interruptions should not, however, be very numerous. The pupils should learn to keep the ball rolling. In fact, one great advantage of the method is that the teacher remains in the background and the pupils consequently acquire an attitude of alert responsibility. In the seventh and the eighth grades backward pupils who read poorly often become interested from hearing the surveys of a story given in class. In one case a very dull girl who at first seemed unable to read *Treasure Island* was finally excited by the oral plot reviews so that curiosity caused her to read the last two-thirds of the book with surprising dispatch.

40. **Topical reproduction of prose.** — A third method which is useful in teaching prose is topical reproduction. Such reproduction may be secured by asking specific questions each of which requires a paragraph in answer; it may be secured also by the assignment of definite topics for study. By way of illustration, for tenth grade study of *Sir*

Roger de Coverley Papers, Spectator, No. 34, "The Club Again," the following topics might be assigned:

(1) Two advantages connected with Addison's club.
(2) A tactful suggestion from Will Honeycomb.
(3) The divergent views of Sir Andrew Freeport.
(4) The Templar's comments on precedent.
(5) Advice from Sir Roger and from Captain Sentry.
(6) A comparison showing the embarrassment of the Spectator.
(7) Defense of the Spectator by the clergyman.
(8) A general surrender compared to a famous agreement in history.
(9) The Spectator's plans for the future.

Such a topical scheme enables the students to see the organization of the essay. The requirement that they give the substance of the paragraph causes them to read closely and to absorb something of the writer's style. In the study of Irving, Addison, Macaulay, or Burke close reading is of peculiar importance. If the student of history acquires an intelligent understanding of conditions, movements, causes, and effects, it matters little whether he gets his knowledge from a text or from lectures. But the student of literature can get the spirit of literature only by reading for himself. Topical reproduction has the further advantage of increasing the student's command of language. It does much toward remedying the poverty of expression general among young people. We must grant, indeed, that it is necessary to guard against those flagrant abuses of topical reproduction which have led to criticism of the method. The teacher must detect the slightest dependence on purely verbal memory and if need be in order to prevent this dependence, he must

change to another method. He must by all means obviate the criticism that the topical method results in inattention and listlessness. He should have the understanding that all members of the class are responsible for continuing the discussion at any point. Frequently in the middle of a topic when a sentence has been completed, he should call on some one else and should require the continuation to be properly related to what has already been given. In the upper years of high school work, he should expect any member of the class to ask a question of the student whose topical discussion has been incomplete. The opportunity to phrase definite questions that do not tell too much, appeals to the ingenuity of the class and intensifies the focus of concentration.

41. **Oral reading.** — A fourth method of teaching literature is through oral reading by the class. This method should not be used regularly or even frequently. In many high schools reading by the class seems to be in vogue solely because the teacher is baffled and bewildered by his task. In having the pupils read he seems to have no immediate aim except to get through the period and no ultimate aim except to get through the day. Perhaps he wants to induce some sort of class activity and is unable to arouse any other kind. It is often apparent that an instructor who uses much class time in reading; bases his questions on the meaning of scattered phrases, that he has made no comprehensive analysis of the literature, and that he could not possibly ask intelligent questions if he did not have the printed page before him. The general results of the method are evident in the inferior quality of the reading. Wherever in English

classes reading aloud is a constant daily class procedure, the reading is not especially correct from a mechanical standpoint nor is it especially expressive. It is strange that after we have heard endless criticism of old-fashioned reading in the grammar grades, high school teachers should kill their class time in such a manner. It is strange that after we have learned from modern psychology the importance of silent reading, high school teachers should fail to plan questions of such a character as to stimulate intelligent silent reading.

Perhaps one-tenth of the class time may properly be given to oral reading carefully planned. But no student should be asked to read aloud unless he has previously been assigned the passage for practice at home. In general, the passages assigned should be highly dramatic dialogue, which by its very nature forces animated expression. There is a certain positive value in assigning the different characters of an emotional Shakespeare scene to the various members of the class, in encouraging home practice, and in training students who have practiced the reading to group themselves before the rest of the class and to read the scene as effectively as they can. Similarly, one may assign to half of a class practice on the speeches of LeGrand and to the other half practice on the speeches of the Negro Jupiter in the scene of *The Gold Bug* where the men dig for treasure. Increased understanding and appreciation is the result for those taking part in such reading or for those hearing it. On rare occasions we may have a class read verse in concert. After class discussion a joint reading of *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day* may be directed to reproducing the time effect of the

various musical instruments. Observation shows that the voices of those students especially sensitive to rhythm and feeling involuntarily tend to lead and to stir responses in the students who are less sensitive.

While the amount of time given to reading by the class must be carefully restricted, still less time can be allowed for reading by the teacher. The practice of reading is common with teachers who have some literary appreciation and who are nevertheless sensible of awkwardness in questioning. Criticism of the practice is difficult because every one is forced to concede that it is at times desirable to read some brief selection to a class. For instance, the teacher must demonstrate the true reading of poetry; he must show that poetry is not to be read like prose, that it is to be read with unfailing though not exaggerated response to the metre, not in sing-song, yet rhythmically. In the junior high school especially he may at times by his own lively reading of one or two chapters create an eager desire among the pupils to read an entire novel. Throughout the high school course he must now and then freely and vivaciously dramatize bits of a story or play. But he should remember that these cases are exceptional. He must not view the class period as a constantly available opportunity for him to make progress in elocution. He should beware of falling in love with the sound of his own voice. Ordinarily if a story is in the library and is accessible, it is far better for the pupils to read it than to hear it read. It is so easy to infer that they are benefited by listening when in reality they are becoming parasites. It is so easy to be misled by their polite facial

expression, indicative of interest but often assumed for the very purpose of deceiving the teacher. At all events, no teacher in junior or senior high school should use more than one-half hour in a month in reading to a class. Furthermore, the teacher must not insult a class by indifferent or inferior oral reading; he must make preparation not less careful than for other types of work.

42. Dramatizing. — A fifth method of handling literature is through dramatizing. Dramatizing is not subject to the objections which have just been urged against oral reading. As a class method, however, it is practicable only within well defined limits because the time and effort demanded might be disproportionate. But the dramatizing of parts of a Shakespeare comedy is excellent training to supplement the class discussion of plot, characters and setting. Since the parts assigned ought to be perfectly memorized, as a rule each student should be given only one character in one scene. No attempt should be made to include all the scenes that are essential to the main thread of the plot. Many scenes in the comedies are not suitable because they are purely intellectual. The best scenes for our purpose are either those where the feeling is intense and movement and gesticulation are the natural result or those where repartee is rapid and sparkling. An illustration of the former type is the quarrel between the two brothers in the opening scene of *As You Like It;* an illustration in the same play of the latter type is the dialogue in which Phebe, Silvius, and Orlando describe the pangs of unrequited love and attain hope through the enigmatic promises of Rosalind.[12]

[12] Act V, Scene 2, lines 72–123.

The characters in any scene that is selected should be assigned immediately after the class study of the scene. The assignment of characters may be influenced partly by student preference, partly by the ease with which different students memorize long passages, partly by the degree of dramatic power so that able actors may have the leading characters. Each scene chosen may be presented twice before the class, once for the purpose of receiving class criticism and suggestion and once for the purpose of showing finished work.

The intense vividness of dramatizing can often aid in the attainment of special aims. It may admirably clarify the origin and character of primitive ballads.[13] The simplest type of pure folk ballad, such as *Baby Lon,* or *The Two Sisters,* best serves the purpose. For the background of *Baby Lon* the explanation is needed that in mediaeval times a man sometimes became an outlaw through having been kidnapped in childhood and that he might not know who were his kinsmen. Any pupil may be chosen to read the interspersed narrative; a boy is assigned the rôle of Baby Lon; three girls are selected to be the three sisters. The entire class are expected to give in concert the alternating lines that constitute the refrain. The brief preliminary narrative is read, telling that the girls had gone to the woods to gather flowers. Then the boy who takes the part of Baby Lon successively presents the alternative to each girl:

> It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
> Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife ?

[13] See Francis B. Gummere, *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), Vol. II, Chap. XVII.

The first two girls in turn give the same answer:

> It's I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
> But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife.

After each response the reader of narrative brings in the tragic consequence:

> He's killed this maid and he's laid her by
> For to bear the red rose company.

The third sister, given the same choice, makes the startling announcement:

> I'll not be a rank robber's wife
> Nor will I die by your wee pen-knife.
> For I have a brother in this wood
> And gin ye kill me, it's he'll kill thee.

In fear Baby Lon demands,

> What's thy brother's name ? Come tell to me.

The sister discloses the appalling truth,

> My brother's name is Baby Lon.

Baby Lon then speaks the last dramatic part of the ballad:

> O sister, sister, what have I done !
> O have I done this ill to thee!
> O since I've done this evil deed,
> Good shall never be seen of me.

The reader of narrative then gives the lines that describe the result of the outlaw's remorse:

> He's taken out his wee pen-knife
> And he's twyned himself of his own sweet life.

Such class participation actually reproduces the communal genesis of the ballad. It shows how, before the age of printing, communities commemorated tragic occurrences transmitted by oral tradition. It accounts for the repetend with its economy of construction and of memorizing as an attempt to expand the story and to include a large number of actors. It explains the partially senseless refrain as the concerted creation of the entire group, sometimes uncertain about the words of the chorus. From the dramatization students learn to detect the unique flavor of the folk ballad. They are impressed by the naïveté no less than by the pathos.

43. **Collecting literary material.** — A sixth method of teaching literature is through an assignment that induces students to read and to bring together a large number of literary selections. The method has chief application to poetry. Students are given lists of subjects such as "The Sea," "Toilers," "The City." Each student, having chosen a specific subject, is expected to find twenty-five or more poems that in one way or another deal with his subject. He is expected to copy each poem on a separate leaf and to make some brief personal comment concerning the impression that the poem or the poet makes on him. He then combines the twenty-five sheets into a booklet and makes a suitable cover. In some instances teachers prefer to encourage selection from modern or contemporary poets. The project has several advantages. It appeals strongly to the constructive interests that many students have. It causes every one to glance through many volumes of verse. It inevitably means familiarity with a great number of poets and the exercise of personal judgment about poetry.

Poetry Books Prepared by High School Juniors

The subjects of the anthologies were student choices from a list furnished by the instructor.

44. Memorizing. — A seventh method of teaching literature is through the assignment of memorizing. At the present time, unfortunately, the memorizing of prose is generally neglected. Perhaps the omission in our schools of all prose memory work may be explained as the reaction consequent upon former overworking of the verbal memory. Yet it is deplorable that very few high school students are able to quote a single prose paragraph from a great writer. Surely one or two prose paragraphs ought to be memorized in each year of the high school course. Students are not averse to memory work, but enjoy it if the amount required is not excessive. The student who knows by heart a paragraph from Burke or Ruskin or Stevenson has had valuable ear training in sentence variety and sentence cadence. One who has perfectly learned the beautiful conclusion of the *Spectator* paper in which Addison describes his feelings in the Abbey,[14] has acquired more worth while knowledge of rhetoric than can be gained from many pages of a text. He henceforth knows how a sentence should ring and he is likely to speak and to write more forceful and more euphonious sentences. The prose that is memorized should be expository or argumentative to the end that it may have the happiest influence on the student's own expression of more or less general ideas. In reciting the paragraphs students should be expected to face the class and should be encouraged to give an effective interpretation.

The memorizing of poetry should be far greater in amount. For memorizing we should assign only the most exquisite poetry, though we should give individuals all pos-

[14] *Spectator*, No. 26, March 30, 1711.

sible freedom in selecting from the best poems. Short complete lyrics which have artistic unity are far better than extracts, which owe part of their value to context. In the junior high school we should give some aid in memorizing. Through class illustration we should show that retention may be a by-product of careful interpretation. Many students are surprised to find that they can repeat a short poem when once they grasp the connotation of the more effective words and the force of all comparisons and when once they share in all fullness the mood of the poet. We must not, however, rest satisfied with the by-product method but must urge many reviews to the end that the poem may be a permanent possession. We may advise any one who finds memory work difficult to look over the lines carefully, to recite them aloud a number of times, and then to write them in order to get visual, auditory, and motor emphasis. If we give this extreme care to interpretation and assignment and if we set the day for reciting poems memorized several days later than our class interpretation, we shall have the satisfaction of finding that our students have truly mastered the poems.[15]

VII. HOME READING

A part of the English teacher's task is to direct and encourage home reading by the pupils. Successful results depend on selecting books of enthralling interest and on careful checking on the reading. In so far as the habit of independent reading is developed, the student's general intellectual progress will be noticeably rapid.

45. Guidance in reading. — The teaching of literature includes not only class study of poems, stories, novels, plays,

[15] Suitable poems for memorizing are listed on pages 105–106.

essays, and orations, but also the wise handling of novels and plays assigned for home reading. Here is a marvelous educational opportunity which we are far from appreciating. If the right books were everywhere available and if all teachers knew these books, a vastly greater amount of reading would be done in the adolescent years. There are many facts which suggest that reading should mainly be done between the ages of ten and eighteen. Oculists inform us that the human eye is best at the age of ten. Adults find that their reading is greatly limited by the pressure of strenuous living. Any bright youngster who gets his hands on a book psychologically adapted to his years and to his tastes finds reading an unadulterated pleasure.

In order to assign the books as judiciously as possible, the teacher must have definite information about the pupil's previous reading. He will need more than one way of checking on the accuracy of this information. He should conduct a brief and unexpected investigation when first he meets a new class. A possible plan involves first of all the dictation of a short list of entertaining books. A scheme that aids in making such a list is to make a search in a public library for novels that bear the names of standard authors and that have conspicuously worn corners, frayed edges, and stained pages. The list might include *Tom Sawyer, Seventeen, The Call of the Wild, The Deerslayer, Captains Courageous, Kidnapped, Jane Eyre, Ramona, Ben-Hur, Tess of the D'Urbervilles.* After the list has been dictated, the request is made that the students use twenty minutes in writing some things that they remember about each book that they have read. This type of investigation is satisfac-

tory because it does not subject the student's veracity to a strain and it results in comments that are a real aid in the assignment of books. In so far as school conditions permit, it is highly advantageous to keep a record of each pupil's home reading during the entire high school course. The simplest method is probably the card index system with a card for each pupil and on this card the list of books read with the dates for each book.

The point system for home reading is emphasized in many state courses of study. It is based on the theory that two or three times as much credit should be allowed for the reading of a long and difficult book as for the reading of a short and easy one. For instance, if *Tom Sawyer* were given two points, *Vanity Fair* might be given five. Such scales of value are not objectionable when they are applied by teachers who have a passionate love of reading and who are eager to communicate the pleasure to others. The point system, however, has sometimes been subject to marked abuse. A certain English teacher who had herself no conception of reading as a delight showed her class a list of books evaluated in points and in her firmest school ma'am manner announced that students would not be promoted if they should lack the requisite number of points on home reading. The result of her attitude and procedure was that her students gave their energy to discovering which books were the best bargains. In order to accumulate credit points rapidly, they selected philosophical novels that could have meaning and interest only for mature readers. It would be difficult to devise a more successful way of getting young people to detest literature.

We should let the students know that we want them to enjoy their reading. A high school teacher who has done much to develop the reading habit talks to her classes in this way:

I don't want you to force yourself to read a book that you find dull. Sometimes this is done by conscientious students from the motive of self-discipline. You can train your will in other ways, by doing without sweets when they are not good for you or by jumping out of bed when you first awaken. But don't train your will by ruining your literary taste. You can learn to love literature only by finding something good that gives you real pleasure. I must warn you, however, about one thing. Some splendid books begin a little slowly and tediously. It is all right to apply your will power and your patience in reading the first fifth or sixth of your book. If you have carefully read the first fifth of your book and still find the reading irksome, I want you to have a conference with me. If I find that you have mastered the beginning of your book, I shall conclude that I made a mistake in the selection and I shall be ready to suggest another book instead.

When the teacher has this view, the students think of home reading not as an oppressive task but as a treasured privilege.

46. **Checking on reading.** — If the books are well selected, many pupils will read without having to be prodded by the teacher. We must avoid looseness, nevertheless, and devise satisfactory modes of checking. It is unfortunate for an unscrupulous student to discover that he can persuade a classmate to coach him on a plot and that he can with very meagre information satisfy the teacher's superficial inquiries. There are several safe ways of handling the work. Of course, the teacher's task is very greatly facilitated if there

are enough copies of any one book so that most of the class can read it at the same time. In this case it may be practicable to prepare mimeographed copies of a multiple choice test that will involve no writing by the students but only underlining.[16] If multiple choice questions are used, choices must be sufficiently numerous and must not in any way furnish a suggestion or a clue. To illustrate, multiple choice questions based on *Jane Eyre* might include such possibilities as these:

Jane Eyre's cousin wanted to teach her: (1) Arabic (2) Hindustani (3) Latin (4) French

Jane Eyre's cousin proposed marriage to her because: (1) he wanted her help (2) he wanted her money (3) he loved her for herself (4) the marriage had been the desire of his dying mother

Only one who had read the book would select the second choice in the first question and the first choice in the second question. In order to avoid giving a clue some of the wrong choices must be plausible and must be more specific than the correct choice. Furthermore, if a book is tested by multiple choices, there must be from ten to twenty questions. If the teacher finds it impossible to prepare the mimeographed sheets, he may test the reading of an entire class by asking four or five definite objective questions to be answered in writing. If each student must read a different book, as is likely to be the case in the small high school, the reading may be tested through personal conference. The teacher should be so familiar with the book that he

[16] For valuable suggestions in regard to multiple choice tests on home reading books, see Maurice W. Moe, "Checking Up on Outside Reading," *English Journal*, XV, 464–467.

avoids stereotyped questions and asks about the least expected points. If he does not use the same questions with different students, he can often secure sufficiently good evidence by inquiring about some one minor point. Definite answers by a student to any one of these questions would be convincing proof that he had read *Vanity Fair:*

What disappointing information does Amelia get about her piano ?

Why is no duel fought between Rawdon Crawley and Lord Steyne ?

What is the cause of the last quarrel between Amelia and Dobbin and what is the means of reconciliation ?

How is Joseph Sedley cared for in his last days ?

Obviously, if the student fails on the first question or two, he should have a chance to answer other questions. Yet it is usually possible for a teacher who knows the books intimately to give an adequate oral test in three minutes' time. Through even a brief conference he has a chance to make discoveries helpful in the guidance of subsequent reading.

VIII. LITERARY HISTORY AND CRITICISM

After students understand a literary selection, perceive the purpose of the author, and the plan that he has used in accomplishing his purpose, they have a natural interest in his personality, the facts of his life, and his relation to other authors. If the history of literature is not placed too early in the high school course, it is an attractive and illuminating study. Discriminating criticism of books and authors should afford a basis for the future judgment of literature.

47. **Biography and history.** — The often mooted question whether the biography of an author should be taught before or after the work written by him is possibly not

always of fundamental importance. The natural order, however, is to teach the biography after the literature. Literature has the greatest primary interest; the biography has only a derived or secondary interest. In accordance with this principle a broad survey of literary history can properly be made only after the students are intimately acquainted with a large number of classics representing different literary periods. In accordance with the same principle, biography and literary history ought to be given a subordinate place in the high school English course.

Though we must not make biography and literary history too prominent, we should strive to make them interesting. It is best not to permit students to give many exact dates but rather to encourage reference to contemporary events. If they say "Pope was born in 1688," they are giving a mechanical repetition; if they say "Pope was born in the year when James II was driven from the throne," they prove superior understanding. The teacher should encourage mention of circumstances which will make an author seem a natural human personality combining virtues and frailties. Attention may be given to the way in which literary accomplishment has been affected by physical vigor, social position, educational opportunities, domestic relations, financial status, and length of life. Places of birth and of residence are far more important than dates and in many cases should be located through the making of literary maps. All possible use should be made of pictures of the writer and of the homes in which he lived. Some time should be allowed for trustworthy, significant, and entertaining anecdotes that give reality to literary characters.

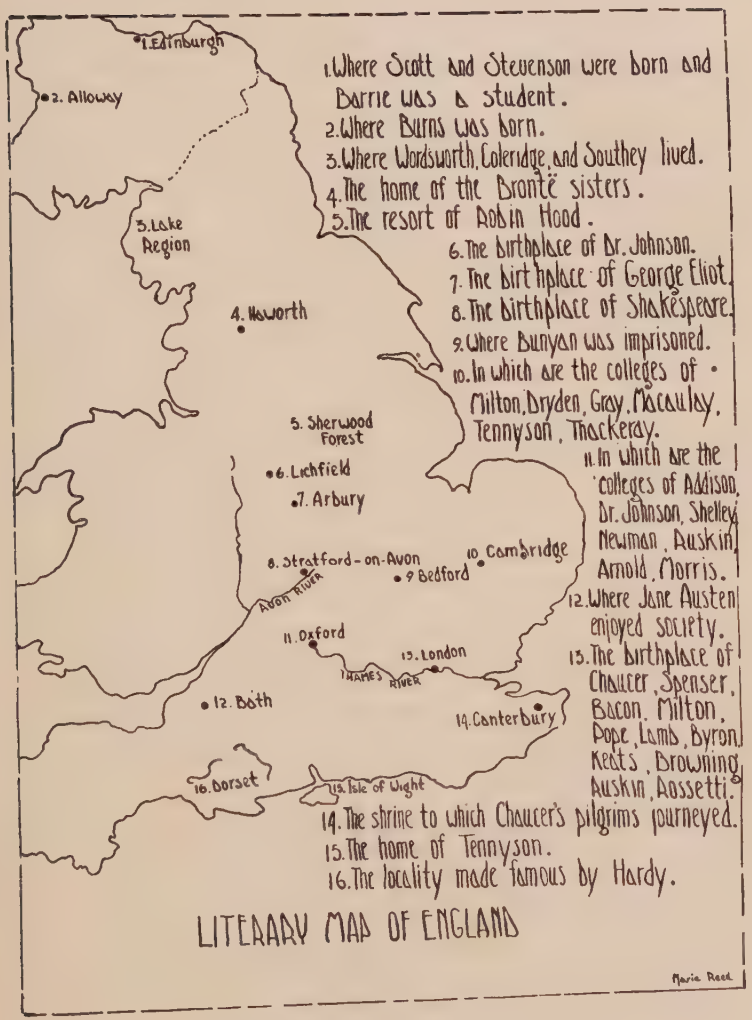
48. Literary criticism. — Valuable training of judgment may be given through class discussion of an author's distinctive characteristics. This discussion should be fruitful in independent thinking and original expression. Keeping ourselves in the background, we should lead the students to discover points of resemblance or of contrast to other literature that they know. We should so handle the discussion as never to place emphasis on adverse criticism. We must remember De Quincey's saying, "Not to sympathize is not to understand." We are failing to do the right kind of literature teaching unless our students feel the magical power of a great writer before they detect his faults and his limitations. They get only slight profit from learning that Longfellow is imitative, that Byron is rhetorical, and that Macaulay is superficial; they derive inestimable enrichment from an early fondness for Longfellow or Byron or Macaulay.

Recognition of distinctive merits is consonant, not inconsistent, with training of judgment. In all our literature teaching there should be a conscious aim of creating standards. For judging poetry there is no truer basis than the memory of richly poetic lines. One who knows by heart a powerful poem and has been moved as by an electrical shock is not likely to regard the saccharine sermons of Edgar Guest as poetry. At the same time students should be taught to analyze the universal and unfailing characteristics of great lyrics. A student who is intimately familiar with Lizette Reese's *Tears* or Sara Teasdale's *Night Song at Amalfi* can be led to see that the first requisite of poetry is sudden, overwhelming emotion of a definite and noble

type. He perceives that the very strength of the pulsating emotion finds spontaneous expression through comparisons never discovered before. He observes that the poet, concerned only for the truth of his own conception and reckless as to all external judgment, makes use of words which are rich in implication and which are startling in their oddity or simplicity or homeliness. No large amount of teaching time is necessary to show how poetry means sudden intensity of elevated feeling, language that is both rhythmical and daring, compression of statement, and originality.

Of even greater importance to the average person are criteria for the judgment of fiction.[17] High school students of course should understand that even a truly great novel may not meet all criteria but that it meets most of them. The first test to be emphasized is veracity to human nature in the relation between motives and conduct. We ask ourselves whether this choice or that decision is a natural one or whether it seems so improbable as to have the effect of a false note. Underlying logic or causation is relentless in a good novel just as it is in human experience. It is the direct opposite of sentimentalism. A sentimentalist has been defined as a person who will not believe that the birds eat worms. The teacher should select sentimental bits from popular novelists and should point out the fallacies that endear these writers to sentimental readers. He may explain that some novelists have been forced to devise two endings for their plots, a logical one for in-

[17] Rewey Bell Inglis, "The Minnesota Study of Teachers' Preparation," *English Journal*, XVI, 60–61, finds that high school teachers have not been sufficiently trained in judging books. It is an important obligation of the college in the first place and of the high school in the second place to give students definite standards as an aid in subsequent reading.


1. Edinburgh
2. Alloway
3. Lake Region
4. Haworth
5. Sherwood Forest
6. Lichfield
7. Arbury
8. Stratford-on-Avon
9. Bedford
10. Cambridge
11. Oxford
12. Bath
13. London
14. Canterbury
15. Isle of Wight
16. Dorset
AVON RIVER
THAMES RIVER
1. Where Scott and Stevenson were born and Barrie was a student.
2. Where Burns was born.
3. Where Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey lived.
4. The home of the Brontë sisters.
5. The resort of Robin Hood.
6. The birthplace of Dr. Johnson.
7. The birthplace of George Eliot.
8. The birthplace of Shakespeare.
9. Where Bunyan was imprisoned.
10. In which are the colleges of Milton, Dryden, Gray, Macaulay, Tennyson, Thackeray.
11. In which are the colleges of Addison, Dr. Johnson, Shelley, Newman, Ruskin, Arnold, Morris.
12. Where Jane Austen enjoyed society.
13. The birthplace of Chaucer, Spenser, Bacon, Milton, Pope, Lamb, Byron, Keats, Browning, Ruskin, Rossetti.
14. The shrine to which Chaucer's pilgrims journeyed.
15. The home of Tennyson.
16. The locality made famous by Hardy.
LITERARY MAP OF ENGLAND
Maria Reed

A Student's Literary Map of England

telligent readers and a happy one for the type of Americans who revel in *Pollyanna.* He should note that certain improbabilities are tolerated provided the true relation of cause and effect is sustained in many main essentials. Soft-hearted Goldsmith pictured with impressive sincerity the succession of hardships and miseries endured by the Vicar's family but finally waved the conjurer's wand to resolve all complications and to sweep parents and children into an earthly paradise. His charming book remains a classic, not because of the irrational transformation, but in spite of it.

Symmetry of construction, like logic, is a merit especially connected with plot. The ideally flawless novel, *The Return of the Native,* is unfortunately too profound for high school students and cannot serve for illustration. But if they are acquainted, as seniors should be, with *Tess of the D'Urbervilles,* they can be shown what a high-powered light Hardy focuses on his central character and theme, how his minor characters and issues are subordinated to the main character and the main movement, how cumulative is his suspense, how telling his dénouement. Students may be interested in the possibility that Hardy's skill in literary construction was furthered by his study of architecture. Galsworthy and Stevenson may also be used to exemplify artistic form. Stevenson's mastery of story technique enabled him to pack the four short days on Treasure Island with excitement that never flags and that at the end reaches hectic intensity.

A test to which our students must learn to attach supreme value is life-like and convincing characterization. They

should make it a practice to inquire whether the characters in a novel have distinct individuality so that readers tend to speculate as to what these characters might do under other conditions. By way of illustration, they may be given a singular proof for the reality of Hamlet's character. Hamlet, meeting the players who are to perform before the King, requests them to insert in their play sixteen lines which he will compose. Critics have actually argued in print as to which sixteen lines Hamlet, a fictitious character, inserted in a fictitious play embodied within another fictitious play:[18] so convincing is the personality of Hamlet. Often, indeed, people whose literary taste is limited pay tribute unconsciously to effectiveness of characterization. A sharp-tongued spinster who expressed bitter disapproval of Henry James' story, *Daisy Miller,* was asked if she disliked Daisy personally. "When I am reading the book," she snapped in answer, "the only thing I can think about is that I'm wild to be her chaperon for two weeks."

The test of originality is equally applicable to other kinds of literature as well as to fiction. The high place that we accord Poe is largely due to his individuality. His indefinable atmosphere of mysterious gloom and despair shot through with strange lights of beauty is altogether his own. World-wide fame has come to Eugene O'Neill because his daring genius has enabled him to use the stage for effects never secured before. Attention of students should be called to the fact that wide acquaintance with literature is obviously a necessary equipment for determining degrees of

[18] Horace Howard Furness, *Hamlet* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1905), I, 247–251.

originality. Among novels which they know, *The Scarlet Letter* and *Huckleberry Finn* are excellent illustrations of extreme originality. Different as these books are, they have this merit in common, that they owe little or nothing to any other novels and that they are each the product of a brilliant thinker's introspection or meditation or observation of life.

A test of fiction that may be open to question but is often useful is whether a novel is packed with ideas. Both Thackeray and Meredith compel every reader to ponder over innumerable enigmas. It makes an average person dizzy to contemplate the brainwork expended and displayed in Balzac's massive creations. H. G. Wells is not the most artistic writer but in his novels no less than in his history he gives us insight into the actual working of government, into scientific thought, into many social complexities and tendencies. About a new novel it may be suggestive to ask the question, Is this book one that clearly widens a reader's mental horizon ?

The test of humor is particularly serviceable. As humor is everywhere in the world, it pervades the work of our greatest fiction writers. Foibles, inconsistencies, and incongruities are so portrayed as to call for a tolerant smile. In Jane Austen and Thackeray every character wears the motley and jingles the cap and bells. There is a laugh on many a page of Dickens. His novels are like a room lined with convex and concave mirrors that exaggerate oddities and peculiarities for ludicrous effect. The test of humor is one that students can apply to the best-sellers that they read. They have no difficulty in perceiving that the wealth of

humor in Barrie, James Branch Cabell and Thornton Wilder is an earmark of their incontestable superiority.

The canon of style should be so explained to high school students that they have at least one or two clear ideas about it. They should get the notion that it means the profoundly sincere use of words to carry the exact angle of one's thought. Some teachers convey this definition by reading a few sentences from current sentimental authors and then reading for contrast a few downright simple sentences from Jane Austen or Thackeray or Howells. It is indeed almost as grave a responsibility to destroy a student's faith in a beloved wishy-washy maudlin author as it is to modify a young person's religion without providing a higher substitute. Here some caution and wariness may be necessary. But if the teacher feels ready to assume the appalling responsibility involved in revealing the limitations of Harold Bell Wright, the first six sentences of his novel, *When a Man's a Man,* are patently sentimental, high-flown, and in a literary sense, insincere.[19] The extent to which we attempt to educate the literary taste of our students must depend partly on the general range of their reading and partly on their genuine interest in acquiring tangible literary standards.

In view of the numerous aspirants who compete for the delightful work of teaching literature, the quality of teaching should be of supreme excellence. The teacher must endeavor to see the plan of each masterpiece just as it was

[19] For a parody of Harold Bell Wright that would be enjoyed by high school students see Henry William Hanemann, "The Regurgitation of Almost Anybody," *Bookman,* LI, 69–72.

seen by the artist who produced it. He must seek the exact knowledge and the skill in statement that will enable him to impart the necessary factual background with clearness and ease. He must plan admirable questions and must be ready, as need arises, to adjust himself to a large variety of class room procedures. He must constantly relate literary experiences and feelings to the experiences and feelings of his students. His teaching must be scholarly and at the same time dramatic and fervid. The direction of home reading is an opportunity to awaken interests that may have permanent influence. Literary history and biography, properly subordinated, should result in a general broadening of intelligence. The training of literary judgment will cause at least a considerable number of our students to use high standards in their future reading choices.

POEMS FOR MEMORIZING

Poems for general reading should be narrative rather than lyrical. Short lyrics, however, are most suitable for memorizing. A list of extremely short lyrics is here provided. The definite number of lines in each poem is placed directly after the poem. One way of handling the memory work in the junior high school is for the teacher to select from the following list eight or ten short poems and give a period to discussion and interpretation of these. Each student then signs for the poem that he prefers to memorize. As a rule only three or four students should take the same poem. A period a week later is given to reciting the poems. Of the fifty poems in the following list the first twenty-five

are by twentieth century poets, of whom many are still living. Through bringing the students into contact with the splendid poetry of our own day we may be able to awaken permanent interest in great living poets as well as in their work.

Modern American Poems

1. *Richard Cory* (16), Edwin Arlington Robinson
2. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* (16), Robert Frost
3. *The Look* (8), Sara Teasdale
4. *Night Song at Amalfi* (12), Sara Teasdale
5. *Prayer for Pain* (28), John G. Neihardt
6. *Ann Rutledge* (12), Edgar Lee Masters
7. *God's World* (14), Edna St. Vincent Millay
8. *Trees* (12), Joyce Kilmer
9. *Outwitted* (4), Edwin Markham
10. *Tears* (14), Lizette Woodworth Reese

Modern British Poems

1. *Mother o' Mine* (12), Rudyard Kipling
2. *Recessional* (30), Rudyard Kipling
3. *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* (12), Gilbert K. Chesterton
4. *The Donkey* (16), Gilbert K. Chesterton
5. *All But Blind* (16), Walter de la Mare
6. *Silver* (14), Walter de la Mare
7. *Leisure* (14), William H. Davies
8. *Sea-Fever* (12), John Masefield
9. *When I Was One and Twenty* (16), Alfred Edward Housman
10. *O when I Was in Love with You* (8), Alfred Edward Housman
11. *The Whisperers* (25), Wilfrid Wilson Gibson
12. *Time, You Old Gipsy Man* (32), Ralph Hodgson

13. *When You Are Old and Gray and Full of Sleep* (16), Yeats
14. *A Fancy from Fontenelle* (14), Austin Dobson
15. *To a Snow-Flake* (31), Francis Thompson

Poems of Various Periods

1. *Butterflies* (16), Davidson
2. *Invictus* (16), Henley
3. *A Reminiscence of Infancy* (8), Locker-Lampson
4. *Requiem* (8), Stevenson
5. *How Sleep the Brave* (12), Collins
6. *Sonnets from the Portuguese,* XLIII (14), E. B. Browning
7. *The Year's at the Spring* (8), Browning
8. *Meeting at Night* (12), Browning
9. *Break, Break, Break* (16), Tennyson
10. *Tears, Idle Tears* (20), Tennyson
11. *A Song, Echo, Tell Me While I Wander* (15), Addison
12. *Constancy* (16), Sir John Suckling
13. *The Solitary Reaper* (32), Wordsworth
14. *The Daffodils* (24), Wordsworth
15. *A Red, Red Rose* (16), Burns
16. *Gifts* (12), Thomson
17. *One Word is Too Often Profaned* (16), Shelley
18. *Up-Hill* (16), Christina Rossetti
19. *The Tiger* (24), Blake
20. *Chartless* (8), Dickinson
21. *Opportunity* (17), Sill
22. *Concord Hymn* (16), Emerson
23. *Lines to a Waterfowl* (32), Bryant
24. *O Captain! My Captain!* (24), Whitman
25. *A Ballad of Trees and the Master* (16), Lanier

A PROJECT IN LESSON PLANS

There are two chief kinds of lesson plans. One of these is intended to aid in actual teaching. It may be brief for it includes only such data as the teacher wishes to have at hand in written form. It might be a list of questions with jottings suggestive of interesting associations together with the assignment for the next day. It does not comprehend a formal statement of aim because the teacher is so absorbed in thought of the goal ahead that memorandum would be superfluous. The other kind of lesson plan is designed to prove to some authority that an apprentice teacher is qualified to teach a particular lesson. For the latter purpose some instructors of Methods classes may find serviceable the following suggested form. For the sake of clearness a lesson plan on *Sohrab and Rustum* is also given. A project that might be carried out by the Methods class would be the making of a lesson plan for teaching the central scene of *The Merchant of Venice* in which Bassanio makes the right choice. After individual plans have been made, the class should discuss relative merits.

Suggested Form for Literature Plan

Assignment

How much of the classic is assigned? Are study questions, topics, or one or two problems given in assignment? If these are included in class procedure below, simply write an (A) before any question or topic given as part of assignment. If they are not included later (a case that seldom occurs), they should be stated here. What topics are explained by the teacher (as

he makes the assignment) so that the students may not encounter too great difficulties? What references are made to other books? For instance, an assignment in Gayley's *Classic Myths* should include topic and page so that immature students may not waste time. What preliminary drill is given on hard names so as to prevent wrong pronunciation? What suggestions are given in order to secure faithful preparation?

Aim of the lesson

The statement of the aim is an explanation of the dominant interests of the literature assigned and of the chief emotion that the literature ought to arouse. The problem is that of placing chief emphasis.

Class procedure

How is connection made with preceding lessons? Does the teacher or do the pupils summarize? The questions or topics that will be used should be given in correct sequence. Anything given specifically in assignment should be preceded by sign (A). Naturally, development questions will not usually take this designation. After each question there should be either the sign (S) or the sign (D) so as to show whether the teacher views the question as a study question or a development question. This sign indicates an important distinction which affects the handling of the work. Under class procedure should be an indication of any special devices such as dramatizing by the teacher or by the students. There should be an account of material which the teacher intends to give the class: illustrations; anecdotes; diagrams; pictures.

Illustration of Lesson Plan

Assignment

Sohrab and Rustum, lines 263–397. See questions below. The teacher suggests the problem as to the result when father and son meet, neither recognizing the other. He calls attention to the fact that epic poetry developed in a primitive period when great pride was felt in material possessions and he asks the class to note instances of this pride. He defines dramatic irony: he explains that sometimes characters in a play or a poem say something that has a startling meaning for the listener, a meaning totally different from that which was intended by the speaker. He drills the class on the pronunciation of *Ruksh, Bokhara, Bahrein.*

Aim

The aim is to show that Rustum and Sohrab were alike helpless in regard to averting the combat, that they were "poised on the top of a huge wave of fate"; that Rustum was really not less generous than Sohrab, that the older warrior was sympathetic and paternal until he had every reason to infer that his youthful foe was trying to secure the honors without incurring the perils of a fight.

Class Procedure

(A) Describe Rustum's equipment and his horse. (S)

(A) What comparison is used to show the feeling of the Persians when Rustum appears? (S)

(A) What comparison is used to describe the arrangement of the two armies? (S)

(A) What comparison is used to show the way in which Rustum eyes the unknown youth? (S)

What feelings in addition to curiosity make the comparison between Rustum and the rich woman a fitting one? (D)

(A) What comparison is used to describe the appearance of Sohrab? (S)

(A) What earnest plea does Rustum make to Sohrab? (S)

(A) What instance of dramatic irony do you find in the plea? (D)

(A) What is the peculiar effect of the plea on Sohrab? (S)

(A) What does Rustum judge to be the real purpose of Sohrab's inquiry? (S)

(A) What change takes place in his manner toward Sohrab? (S)

(A) What taunt of Rustum's is an instance of powerful dramatic irony? (D)

(A) How does Sohrab justify his own boldness in encountering such a tried warrior as the one opposed to him? (S)

(A) What trait of character is revealed in this speech of Sohrab? (D)

Technical Questions

What tendency of epic poetry is conspicuous in the description of Rustum's armor and the equipment of his horse? (D)

What is peculiar in the form of the line: "So slender Sohrab seemed, so softly reared"? (D)

Compare the words *literal, alliteration,* and *allusion* in order to see the exact meaning of *alliteration.* (D)

What does Rustum mean by the words: "I musé what this young fox may mean"? (D)

In Rustum's thought what is the point of resemblance between Sohrab and a young fox? (D)

What is the difference between the expression "young fox," a metaphor, and the similes that you have noted? (D)

PROJECT IN OUTLINING A LITERARY SELECTION

Outlining is simply a graphic method of teaching organization. It contributes to the understanding of exposition and argument. The outlining of a literary selection aids the student in planning and organizing his own original paper. The outline which is here presented is designed to aid the Methods class in working out similar outlines of other literary selections and to aid the high school teacher in fruitful teaching of this particular essay. The exponent system of numbering is generally preferred to other systems by those who have tested it. Other systems are obliged to use four or five different ways of indicating subordination, such as Roman numerals, Arabic numerals, capital letters, small letters, and sometimes letters of the Greek alphabet. According to the exponent system the largest thought divisions are numbered in their natural order with the exponent 1. If a major division is subdivided, the coördinate subdivisions are numbered in their natural order with the exponent 2. Similarly if a subdivision contains minor ideas under it, these coördinate minor ideas are numbered in order with the exponent 3. Thus for each additional subdivision the exponent reaches one point higher. Any one who will compare the essay itself with the outline here presented will find that all difficulties vanish and that the system becomes self-explanatory. The following outline should not be given to high school students. As they proceed in their study of the essay, they should work out their own outline in their own phrasing. This outline is for the guidance of the high

school teacher. If sufficient time can be found, the Methods class should work out a similar outline of Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson.*

Outline of Palmer's *Self-Cultivation in English*

1¹. Though English may be studied in four ways, I shall discuss only one of the four.

1². I shall not consider the study of English as a science, for such a study demands a large apparatus of books.
2². I shall not consider the historical study of English, for notwithstanding the advantages of such study, few people can have the time for it.
3². I shall not consider the study of English for pleasure, because it is peculiarly difficult to give suggestions that will be helpful to a large number of people.
4². I shall consider English as a tool.

2¹. The advantages of literary power are very great, for

1². It means influence over others.
2². Practice and skill in formulating our thoughts aid us in thinking.
3². Literary power is the most lasting of possessions.
4². Since literary "style is the man," it is the final test of a man's culture.

3¹. Though literary power is often supposed to be innate, it is really the result of persistence and care.

4¹. Observe these directions:

1². Look well to your speech.

1³. Opportunities for oral practice are chiefly significant in the development of literary power.

2^3. The influence of speech marks all great literature and literary epochs.

1^4. It marks the best Greek literature.
2^4. It marks the best English literature.

3^3. These opportunities for oral practice are open to everybody.
4^3. Seek three qualities in speech.

1^4. Seek exactness.
2^4. Seek dash and audacity: we can combine exactness and audacity by observing sharply and by seeking to report our observations in expressive language.
3^4. Seek range of language.

1^5. The range of most people is extremely limited.
2^5. We must overcome the laziness which is the explanation of our limited vocabulary.
3^5. We need not use technical expressions but we should avail ourselves of the approved resources of language.

4^4. Summary: Let speech be daring, accurate, and full.

2^2. Welcome every opportunity for writing.

1^3. Writing alone teaches structure.
2^3. No one can learn writing without enduring the hardships of the work.
3^3. The large opportunities today offered for practice explain the universal skill that has been attained.

3^2. Remember the person for whom you are writing.

1^3. Your constant effort must be to make your ideas clear and agreeable to him.

2^3. This sort of unselfishness has a moral value.

4^2. Find your help from your subject.

1^3. The trained and able writer follows with docility the guidance of the subject.

2^3. The power of Jesus is an illustration of docile subordination of self to a message.

5^2. Do not cease your efforts, even when your attempts at literary expression are altogether unsatisfactory.

5^1. While we should keep ourselves under good influences, we must remember that our own effort is the real means toward attaining a mastery of language.

PROJECT IN TEACHING VERSIFICATION

Let some member of the Methods class illustrate before the class the correct way to teach versification. A sure procedure for reducing difficulties is in the beginning to select lines with a number of polysyllabic words. Take some very regular line of Poe's *The Raven* that has many polysyllabic words. A development that will enable any class to mark the measure is given in these questions:

(1) What words in the line have more than one syllable ?
(2) Where is the regular accent on each of these words ?
(3) Since a hill implies two valleys, what do we know about the syllables adjoining these heavy syllables ?
(4) You have now marked a considerable number of syllables. Mark the remaining syllables so that they follow the scheme of what you have already marked.

After these questions have been answered and the light and the heavy syllables have been marked, the class should note that in English poetry each foot includes one accent, that it is simplest to view the beat as coming either at the end or at the beginning of the foot, that if a line begins with a beat, the first foot will end just before the next beat. If there should be time for further illustration of the trochee, Tennyson's "Home they brought her warrior dead" may be used. The iambic measure may be taught through *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* the dactyl through *Evangeline,* the anapest through *Annabel Lee.*

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Why is it necessary to use more development questions in teaching poetry than in teaching fiction ?
2. Let the Methods class suppose that they are to teach *The Merchant of Venice* to very immature pupils and accordingly plan to present the substance of the first scene in a very dramatic and vivacious talk, which will be followed by the assignment of questions. Let three of the Methods class give these talks before the class. It is best for those who are to speak to withdraw until their turn comes. The class should determine which is the best presentation.
3. Write a lesson plan for teaching the central scene of *The Merchant of Venice* in which Bassanio chooses the right casket.
4. Let the Methods class plan a brief talk on the historical background for *Ivanhoe* and also the teaching of the first chapter. After the class has assembled let the instructor select one member to give the talk on background and another member to question the Methods class on the chapter in a manner

as far as possible that would be appropriate to the tenth grade. After the material has been covered in this way, the entire class should consider the merits of the teaching and possible improvements.

5. In teaching a Shakespeare play why is it a mistake to expect the pupils to learn the meaning of an immense number of archaic words? What justification is there for having them master all details, line by line and word by word, of one or two scenes?
6. Explain why ballads have interest for adolescents.
7. What resemblance do you find between Owen Wister's *The Virginian* and the novels of Harold Bell Wright and Gene Stratton Porter? What merits does *The Virginian* have which the novels of the other writers lack?
8. Of the seven tests given for judging a novel which four have clear application to the judgment of a modern serious realistic drama?
9. Let some member of the Methods class take a short modern poem and discuss all details so that the class memorize the poem through the by-product method. Walter de la Mare's "All But Blind" and Austin Dobson's "A Fancy from Fontenelle" are suggested.
10. If you wish to show high school students the difference between realism and romance what details in *The Rise of Silas Lapham* and what details in *Treasure Island* should you bring into contrast?
11. In order to show Poe as a great originator in the detective story, what resemblances can you find between Poe's story *The Purloined Letter* and Conan Doyle's *A Scandal in Bohemia*?
12. Let some member of the Methods class show how to analyze *Julius Caesar* from the standpoint of antecedent action, rise in interest, central culmination, decline, and final culmination.

13. A certain teacher on completing the brief history of English literature used two class periods in what she called an index review. She asked the class to go through the index and formulate a significant statement about each author or each book. In connection with the plan what cautions can you suggest ?
14. Let some member of the class take a modern drama such as Galsworthy's *Justice* and show how each character pleads his own cause and has a fundamental conviction of his own rightness.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHING OF WRITTEN COMPOSITION

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The aim of written composition is to secure a more effective and more artistic use of language than is possible in oral work. The difficulties of original writing are not to be minimized. Such writing must therefore be definitely limited in amount. It must be so motivated that the student is inspired to do his best.

49. The aims of written composition. — The handling of written composition is usually and perhaps correctly viewed as the most arduous part of English teaching. This work, however, may bring the teacher a large measure of satisfaction and enjoyment if he finds the true solution for some problems that are involved. In the first place, there should be no misapprehension concerning the aim. The chief aim is not the attainment of mechanical correctness. There are indeed far more effective ways of teaching spelling and the rudiments of punctuation than through original composition. Though accuracy in composition is of course not to be neglected, it must be subordinated to the main purpose. On the practical side, the main purpose is to give students confidence in their own opinions, to teach them to arrange these opinions in a winning way and to phrase them in a manner that will be clear and persuasive. One aspect of the practical objective is to show them how

to influence others for their own material advantage. Another aspect is to give assurance and stimulation to talented young people who are intimidated by the adult world, who are afraid to think for themselves, and who hesitate to state boldly the truth as they see it. On the literary side, the main purpose is to train students in observation, to show them how to use in writing their first-hand experience and contact with life, how to utilize the concrete details of daily living for artistic ends, how to triumph over petty annoyances by the discovery of humorous incongruities, and how to entertain others by depicting these incongruities.

50. **The amount of written composition.** — These ambitious aims are more likely to be attained if quality and not quantity receives the emphasis. We must recognize the necessity for planning a very conservative number of themes. The failure of many teachers to admit bravely and candidly just how little written composition is practicable is responsible for the fact that in numerous small high schools there is literally none. Another unhappy effect due to this general evasiveness is a considerable amount of shamming. A Middle-Western superintendent who had previously employed distinctly mediocre English teachers informed a newly secured teacher that it had been the invariable practice of his high school to require twenty original themes from every student every year. She was intelligent enough not to be deceived by the misrepresentation. She well knew that under the conditions obtaining in that school no pupil produced ten original themes in a year. In another high school of the same state a young teacher who had the usual number of pupils said to a visitor, "I read and criticize an

original theme by every student that I teach every day." The freshness of her rosy cheeks belied her statement. The fact that she did not keep her lie closer to probability proved that she knew nothing about the demands of written composition. A teacher who would attempt to read one theme per pupil per day would probably be insane to start with and in any case would soon be fit for the lunatic asylum.

The fact is, composition work is costly. It is not costly in the sense that the public is paying any high price for it, but it is costly in a far more important sense, in the heavy demands which it makes on the truly conscientious teacher. Even the most fertile brain finds some difficulty in constantly supplying one hundred and fifty young people with inspiring subjects.[1] Even a rapid and resourceful thinker is sometimes at a loss for ideas to aid those who lack material. Even the most alert and clever teacher is occasionally unable to make the class period lively and entertaining at the time when the energy of the students is expended on the laborious task of writing. Even the physically strong woman who burns the midnight oil to correct themes is usually reducing her vitality, impairing her eyesight, and demonstrating the inferiority of her sex in judgment.

It is true that various schemes have been glibly proposed for lightening the labor of correcting papers. One of these

[1] This question was answered in writing by eighty-two Kansas City high school teachers:

In so far as written composition is neglected in high school English teaching, which of these factors is probably the largest cause for such neglect: (1) the difficulty of finding good subjects and of aiding students who lack ideas; (2) the labor of correcting the papers? Seventeen teachers selected No. 1; sixty-five teachers, No. 2. Since the selection of No. 1 is a frank acknowledgment of personal limitations, we may infer that a large percentage of English teachers regard No. 1 as an unsolved problem.

is reading and criticism by fellow students. Brief experience makes such a remedy seem fantastic. The high school student who is himself most accurate will mark points of a doubtful and non-essential nature and will overlook very gross errors. One who has confidence in such a remedy might hope to see water rise higher than its source. Another plan that is sometimes suggested is for the teacher to assign the themes, have them written, and then read either a small proportion of all the themes or a small part of each theme. Those who seriously recommend this procedure advise entire frankness with students.[2] The plan is based on two suppositions, that the benefit is more in the writing than in receiving criticism, and that students, believing that their work will not be read, will continue to write with painstaking effort. The former supposition is probably sound. The latter could seem plausible only to a most ingenuous and sanguine person.

The real solution is found in sufficiently reducing the amount of composition work. Since the work makes heavy exactions, we may well rejoice that the benefits are controlled by the law of diminishing returns. A fair amount of carefully planned composition training means in the case of most students nearly as great gain as the amount doubled could give. The limitation in any particular case will be dependent on the total number of students, on the number of classes, and on the weight of additional duties assigned to the teacher.[3] If he has one hundred and seventy pupils

[2] Franklyn B. Snyder, "English A Once More," *English Journal*, IX, 261–265.

[3] Cf. W. Wilbur Hatfield, "Smaller Classes or Larger?" *English Journal*, XIII, 153. The writer recognizes that the number of original papers assigned will inevitably be influenced by the total number of pupils in the classes of any teacher.

in five classes and the average amount of committee work, he is doing very well if he secures from each pupil in each year of high school work two long themes of six to ten paragraphs each and ten short themes, most of which may be single paragraphs. The long themes might range from eight hundred to fifteen hundred words, and the short themes from one hundred and fifty to four hundred words.[4]

51. **Motivation.** — The very fact that the amount of writing cannot be excessive may help us secure from our pupils an unstinted expenditure of time and energy on each assignment. We may use the value of the work as a powerful appeal. Two questions that may be put to a class will emphasize this value. If the teacher inquires, "How many would like much composition work this term?" hardly one-tenth of the class will give an affirmative answer. If he then inquires, "How many wish that you had had far more composition work in the past?" the affirmative is unanimous. The two votes illustrate the truth that most people would gladly escape the toil but crave the facility that results from toil. In making our appeal to students, we should never underrate the toil or the difficulties.[5] We should never deny that it is harder to form opinions and to

[4] This question was answered in writing by eighty-one Kansas City high school teachers (unsigned):

In a school year of nine or ten months how many original paragraphs averaging 140 words each by every student taught do you consider that high school English teachers working under usual conditions ought to be expected to assign and correct?

The median of the answers is 34.8 paragraphs. The opinion of many teachers who have had varied experience in other localities seems to be in close accord with this reasonable and practicable median.

[5] The objection to insincerity or any sort of humbug in teaching written composition is admirably put in an unsigned article, "A Bit on the Project Method," *English Journal*, XIII, 210–211.

give them suitable expression than it is to appropriate knowledge which has been acquired, classified, and formulated by others.

Occasionally some layman or even an educator may argue that if young people feel no special urge toward writing, they should not be assigned the task. The argument is based on the aphorism that he who has nothing to say is blessed if he says nothing. The refutation of the argument is simply that composition gives practice in wresting ideas from nebulousness and that those who have had the practice are likely to be more successful later in expressing their wishes and views. Our students can readily see that a little training will save them from such abject helplessness as they have occasionally experienced when they have attempted to write a full and pleasing letter. They well know that influence in a professional career may be considerably affected by the power to put thoughts on paper. A value that should receive especial consideration is the positive improvement of oral language through written composition. Who can deny that the effort to put one's best ideas into artistic written form contributes to definiteness, variety, and forcefulness in speech ?

The attitude of the teacher, no less than that of the students, is of greatest moment. Because of the difficulty of the task he must give the inspiration of a strong, hopeful personality. His force and his optimism will enable the students to undertake a piece of writing with faith in their powers, with the realization of the immense significance of the work, and with the determination to do their very best. Assurance of success is contagious. Moreover, the teacher

may multiply his efficiency tenfold by a readiness to give aid outside of class. Of course he must be judicious in the distribution of such help and must not allow himself to be monopolized by a few inconsiderate pupils. Nor must he be so generous with outside time as to impair his class room vitality. But a willingness on his part to help students over hard places shows them that he is unselfishly devoted to their interest and often causes them to double their efforts. It may be the means of bringing about mutual understanding between teacher and pupils. It may prevent the paralysis that ensues from discouragement. A conversation invariably convinces the disheartened student that he has plenty of ideas and plenty of inspiration for his theme. Frequently such a conservation reveals some flaw in the class room instruction and is consequently invaluable to the zealous teacher.

IX. THE PROBLEM OF AUDIENCE OR PUBLIC

We must not neglect any method of getting a reading public for the productions of our students. Writing without hope of auditors is working in a vacuum. There are several expedients that will secure a public even for the efforts of our less gifted students.

52. An audience for creative students. — A question which is connected with motivation and which must therefore be anticipated is how to secure a sympathetic and interested audience for the compositions of our students. The teacher, who reads all the themes, is of course deeply sympathetic and keenly interested. Yet he can hardly be viewed as the ideal public. Of this formidable problem there are various solutions. To a limited extent the class may serve as audience. Although class time can be spared for only four or

five especially successful dialogues, stories, or essays, the possibility that any particular composition may be selected for class reading operates as a general incentive that is not to be undervalued. A similar opportunity is afforded by the school paper. Clever ambitious students will do almost any amount of writing if a part of their work can be published. Frequently the school paper can use six or seven spicy editorials. In a small town it is sometimes possible to secure for a few writers an audience through the columns of the daily papers. An enterprising teacher who taught the senior English class discovered that town papers gave very little school news. She initiated the class in the study of the daily papers. Each member of the class worked out editorials and reports on local news. The class heard the reading of all the short papers and elected the three who were considered most successful as reporters for the town papers. The three reporters furnished daily a column of news dealing with the entire school system, including the work done in the various grades, athletics, school projects, and entertainments. Periodically another such composition contest was held and a change of reporters was made so as to give all who were qualified the honor and the experience. There are countless possible arrangements by which we may get a hearing for our more talented students. We need not fear inconsistency with democratic standards and ideals when we seek larger opportunities in writing for the gifted minority.

53. **An audience through the exhibit.** — A mode of securing a public for the compositions of less able writers is the semiannual exhibit. The original work of all students

in English classes should be open to public inspection for a half day at the end of each semester. There is little educational value in an exhibit which displays only the writing of brilliant students. The exhibit may easily serve to motivate the work of indifferent or mediocre students. The only precaution necessary is that grades should not be recorded in the composition books or folders but should instead be given to the writers in some other way. If parents understand that their presence is appreciated, they are glad to come, look the books over, and give encouragement. High school teachers in other departments should be invited to come and glance over the work. Many of the pupils like to read bits from the books of their classmates. Wherever the exhibit has become a regular practice, it has been an immense influence both for good form and for good expression.

54. An audience through public speaking. — A most valuable and on the whole a far-reaching solution for the problem of audience is to be found in the use of written compositions as a basis for public speaking. One of the two longer themes of each year may well be a debate or an oration. The term "written speech" may be used if the word "oration" suggests a too formal or a too pretentious type of speaking. At all events the speech should be argumentative and not expository. Young people do not readily assume the didactic manner necessitated by an expository address. They are much more inclined to lose self-consciousness and to trust in their message when persuasion is the goal. When they have carefully written and faithfully memorized brief argumentative speeches, there is no diffi-

culty whatever about getting an audience.[6] Even if the speeches are trite and platitudinous, the charm of youthful personality will prevent the audience from being oppressed by a sense of heroic endurance. Literary societies can often serve as a forum for the delivery of such speeches. In many cases school assemblies may be available for the delivery of orations by seniors. If time cannot be spared for each complete oration, with judicious cutting one-half may be memorized and delivered very effectively. The method has been repeatedly tried with marked success. For instance, if the speech is eight minutes in length, some of the duller and less essential parts may be omitted so that the student will speak only four minutes. In speaking, as in athletics, motivation should be secured through contests. Every high school should arrange for interschool as well as local oratorical contests and debates. It is indeed a singular commentary on educational standards that thousands of high schools constantly engage in interschool athletics and are totally without interschool contests in public speaking. Surely the coming years must give larger training in an art which is so directly connected with citizenship in a republic.

X. FORM, ORIGINALITY, AND PUNCTUALITY

Composition teaching can be successful and effective only when forethought is given to good form, originality and punctuality. Form should be standardized. Faulty handling on the part of the teacher is usually responsible for dishonest writing. Punctuality in written work is very largely a matter of habit.

55. **Form.** — Although good form is not the major aim in high school composition, it must never be neglected.

[6] A list of subjects that have been used and that have been found satisfactory is given on pages 182–183.

Moreover, it should, as far as possible, be a matter of prevision and not of revision. Every high school should furnish students with clearly formulated manuscript directions uniform for all departments and applicable to all work not written in the class room. These directions should include such points as a standard kind of unlined paper, a standard width of left-hand margin, a standard distance of title from writing, and from the top of the page. Even a standard liner to be placed under the unlined paper should be prescribed. Thus a student who has a poor eye for straight lines will be able to prepare a satisfactory manuscript. If the manuscript rules include also the requirements for correction after criticism, time will be saved and better results will be attained. Good form is important both for itself and for the influence that it has on creative effort.

56. **The prevention of plagiarism.** — Honesty is the very foundation of all profitable composition training. It is a grave mistake to presume that no precautions are needed to secure honest work. Too often the brilliant periods that fall from the lips of high school orators at commencement exercises are such as could be constructed only by a master of rhetorical effect. They may please a large portion of the audience, but they cannot fail to make the judicious grieve. Recently in connection with an intercollegiate oratorical contest a certain college offered a peculiar defence for an oration attacked on the ground of plagiarism. The defence was that the writer had received most of his composition training in the high school and that in high schools piecemeal borrowing is permitted or even encouraged. It is apparent that such a statement is too sweeping to be just.

Nevertheless, many instructors not only in high schools but also in colleges make assignments that inevitably result in dishonest practices. A college sophomore who is required to produce a ten thousand word thesis in his major subject is not zealously particular to enclose in quotation marks every phrase that is not his own. Is it not deplorable that many teachers accept beautiful mosaic work without any sort of challenge or objection? Who can measure either the intellectual or the moral injury for which they thus make themselves responsible?

The utmost vigilance is essential to insure at all times the proper use of materials and of sources. Fortunately, a very full class discussion of what constitutes a legitimate use of other people's knowledge or ideas is sufficient to give us the right sort of work from most of our students. Some people who plagiarize do so not because they are fundamentally lacking in rectitude but because they have never been given a clear explanation of literary theft. Not infrequently a student completes the high school course without knowing that it is improper to imitate the plot of a story that he has read. We should emphasize the necessity for extreme care in taking notes from periodicals or books and the necessity for original organization and original phrasing. We should explain the test of parallel columns: that our work is vitiated whenever three or four significant words can be traced to a similar group of significant words in a published article. We should call attention to the fact that good comparisons and figures carry a patent. We should point out that we are free to use other people's fine phrases if only we are honorable enough to give just recognition to the

originators. We should argue that the moral obligation to be scrupulous is the stronger just because there is usually no legal punishment for literary theft.

In addition, we must secure favorable conditions that will reduce the temptations to dishonesty. We must not repeat our subjects from term to term and from year to year; too many themes of former students are floating around and are available. The various English teachers must confer and must avoid using the same subjects; otherwise, a theme will be copied and will be handed in to two or more teachers. Furthermore, in order both to promote honesty and to prevent discouragement we must either furnish the least inventive student with ample material or show him exactly how he can get it. In the case of short-story composition a general assignment that a story is to be written will never do. At times the teacher should make up a plot and expect all the class to write on the plot that he gives unless some student wants immediately to submit for approval some other plot which is evidently original. Another method of preventing plagiarism is to use several days in oral narration of personal experiences which involve struggle, suspense, and climax. The teacher can then select some of these incidents as suitable for expansion. Moreover, if we want our students to depend upon themselves, we must not make unreasonable requirements. A university graduate in a city high school lately assigned oration subjects on one day and required that the orations be handed in the next day. When with some pride she announced that the orations came in promptly and were very good, her more acute fellow teachers were suspicious of such results. When a considerable number of

students work improperly, the teacher's assignment is invariably at fault.

Finally, our habitual attitude toward the themes that we receive will have much to do with the integrity of the writing. We must often be ready to accept with appreciation and even to grade liberally work that is neat and painstaking, however crude or lifeless it may be. We must always show approbation when our students do their best in an honest way. On the other hand, we must acquire the power to detect dishonest work whenever it is given to us. Of course, dishonesty in an exceptional or occasional theme is no reflection on the teacher, but it should be discovered and should receive due attention. It is not very difficult to detect plagiarism in exposition or argument because the student who steals phrases and sentences seldom has any power to organize the stolen scraps or to attain continuity. We must attempt to know the characteristic modes of thought and to gauge correctly the powers of all our students. If all these precautions mean for us endless labor, they find their justification in our great aim, teaching genuine sincere self-expression.

57. Punctuality. — Still another problem of composition that should be anticipated is training in punctuality. We shall rarely find our students dilatory about completing original composition work if we make the right beginning. Since punctuality is so largely a matter of habit, we should be especially careful to see that all students are prompt with the first two or three compositions. To this end we must give enough help to the perplexed and allow enough time to slow workers. We may explain that on written

work punctuality is more important than on any other kind of work. Since an extremely common cause of delay is the writer's dissatisfaction with the best that he can do, we should express a preference for an inferior paper handed in promptly to a better one delayed. Only very unusual circumstances warrant any exception to this rule. Above everything we must give immediate personal attention to any delinquency. A teacher is sadly handicapped who does not discover the missing one or two themes until he begins to read the pile or who actually ignores delinquency until the class are ready to work on another set of themes. Though penalizing by lowering the grade is far from being the ideal way of preventing procrastination, it is much better than any public criticism. If penalizing through the grade is absolutely uniform and consistent, it is likely to be effective. Under favorable conditions a far more satisfactory way is to permit the student who offers some reasonable excuse to name the time when he can hand in the work. We may vastly increase the feeling of responsibility if we expect any delinquent student to give in writing the explanation for delay and the future time selected by himself for the completion of the theme. Does not the general experience of teachers testify that students are meticulous in keeping absolutely definite and reasonable promises ?

XI. THE PROBLEM OF FINDING SUBJECTS

Interest in writing is very largely affected by the subject. The successful English teacher must constantly search for new subjects. Suggestions can always be obtained from periodicals.

58. **The right subject for the right person.** — Perhaps the problem on the solution of which successful composi-

tion teaching most largely depends is right choice of subjects. From the standpoint of economy and efficiency it is often desirable that an entire class write on a single subject. Any single subject used must have at least a fair degree of interest for everybody. In many composition assignments the student may be left free to choose a subject. Where this freedom is possible, the teacher should furnish five or six subjects of the type desired and should give some hints for the possible treatment of any one of them. Then if a student wishes to make a still different selection, he should submit his subject for approval in order to be sure that it conforms to the general purpose of the assignment. A personal conference with the teacher sometimes leads to the discovery of an ideal subject. Recently a high school teacher gave her senior class a long list of subjects for speeches. In talking with a boy who found it difficult to make a choice, she asked him about his hobbies. Learning that he intended to be a doctor, she suggested the subject, "A Heroic Profession." He was delighted with the idea and wrote an enthusiastic and stirring speech about the charities of doctors and their sacrifices in the interest of scientific investigation.

59. **Sources of subjects.** — Since we need so many subjects, we must always be on the lookout for the most suitable. The habit of watching for a good subject must be as instinctive as is the habit which some people have of watching for a four-leaf clover. Any good rhetoric text offers a liberal supply of subjects although only a few of these are likely to be found satisfactory. But we can discriminate by rejecting those that would never inspire any-

body and also those which could be suggestive only to a mature mind. In order to test a subject we shall often need to make a brief outline and then to consider whether the material involved is familiar enough to high school boys and girls. On rare occasions we may be able to find a good moving picture as the basis of composition in the junior high school. One special source of material for stories is the announcement of awards by the Carnegie Hero Fund. It is easy for students to expand the incidents mentioned in connection with these awards. As to subjects for short papers, our pupils can give us help. For instance, when our resources are at the lowest ebb, we may request every member of a class to hand in the statement of three ideas, each of which is suited to paragraph development. Though we must reject two-thirds of the subjects, we are likely to gain enough good suggestions to make us wonder at our previous poverty. The plan has the distinct advantage of bringing us closer to the thought of boys and girls. Of all the sources of subjects the most helpful is the weekly or monthly periodical. There is no limit to the range suggested by the *Outlook, Time,* and the *Literary Digest.* The "Contributor's Column" of the *Atlantic Monthly* presents many easy topics for conversational essays. In oration work the *Survey* and the *Nation* are especially valuable because of the emphasis on social needs.

XII. SUBJECTS FROM LIFE AND OBSERVATION

Like all phases of English teaching, composition assignments should be marked by variety. We shall, therefore, find it profitable to consider the chief classes of composition projects. The best material that we can use in writing is derived from our own experiences or intimate observation. Letter writing should be related to numerous possible problems.

60. **Autobiography.** — Of all subjects the most natural is autobiography.[7] De Quincey has given us the key to entertaining composition. He says that every one can write an interesting book if he will but tell the experiences of his own life together with the feelings that accompanied those experiences. This direction might perhaps seem to have something of the elusiveness which we have felt in the advice given us in childhood, "You will have no trouble catching the birds if you will only put salt on their tails." Yet it is really easier to train high school freshmen in literary sincerity than it is to train college freshmen. Very young students readily grasp the idea that autobiography can be interesting only if we tell the feelings of which we are half ashamed; that a narrative is worthless if we attribute to ourselves the fine feelings which we think we ought to have had and which at the same time we well know we did not have. Accordingly, we can get excellent suggestions for narration if we request a high school class to write as topics outstanding reminiscences of childhood. Many will recall the strong childish impression connected with such exper-

[7] For an interesting discussion of children's attitudes toward different types of composition, see Dora V. Smith, "The Danger of Dogma concerning Composition Content," *English Journal*, XV, 414–424. The conclusion is that in the junior high school the personal experience ranks in interest above every other type of topic.

iences as the first day at school or the first quarrel with a schoolmate. They have reached a plane from which they can look back on these experiences with the illumination of humor. They now have the detachment as well as the sympathy needed by the artist.

61. Dialogues. — As autobiography utilizes experience, the writing of dialogues utilizes observation. One or two good subjects and a few suggestions will enable the greater number of the class to turn out something readable and amusing. By way of preparation an anecdote involving dialogue should be given as a dictation exercise so that no one may be uncertain about indentation, quotation marks, and other punctuation marks. For the original dialogue the teacher may assign the title, "The Prodigy." He then furnishes suggestive material of this sort:

I had never seen my first cousin, Mrs. John Smith. Having occasion to go through the city in which she lived, I asked if it would be convenient for me to spend the night with her. Cousin Grace, as I call her, replied in the most cordial manner. She told me that I would have the chance to see her eight-year-old son, whom everybody considered a prodigy. I made the contemplated trip. The night of my arrival I saw only Cousin Grace. The next morning Cousin John was as cordial as his wife had been. Just before the breakfast hour I could hear the mother beseeching her little son to get up. Her entreaties were ultimately successful. When the child came to the table, he monopolized the talk by complaining of several articles of food. He was promised various rewards if he would eat something. When he told his parents that his last month's school report was unfair, they agreed with him and praised his brightness as compared with the ability of other children. After breakfast was over, there were further struggles in which the child had

his way at every turn. I left for my train with a feeling of relief.

Because this sort of situation has come within the observation of all high school students, there can be no lack of material. Details may be modified in any way desired. The actual conversations should be written at length and should be made as ludicrous as possible.

Many different types of character may be used as the theme of dialogue. A subject that is easy to handle is "The Inquisitive Woman." The writers may use any setting desired, a street car, a railway coach, or a public waiting room. Perhaps they will find it natural to make the narrator serve as the subordinate character who is to be the victim of the woman's insatiable curiosity. The class should be encouraged to exaggerate for humorous purposes, and to arrange the woman's inquiries according to the degree of their impertinence. High school youngsters have usually come in contact with a type of woman who is eager to investigate the age as well as the income of any stranger and consequently they have plenty of clever ideas. To illustrate further, such a subject as "The Shoe Sale" assigned to an entire class results in a great variety of natural colloquies showing how feminine vanity is often flattered into paying a high price for instruments of torture. Emphasis may be placed on both the wiliness of the clerk and the idiocy of the customer. There are many other characters on which high school students can write humorous dialogues: the life insurance agent or the book agent whose limitless persistence recognizes no refusal and is in the end triumphant; the gossiping caller who apologetically hints scandals about a dozen different

people in town; the ignorant idler who discourses on politics and government at the corner grocery store; the milliner who is able to sell her ugliest hat; the doleful Job's comforter visiting a sick room; the proud mother who considers each one of her six children a genius in some particular field. Telephone conversations are also rich in possibilities. A student who writes a funny dialogue feels a justifiable pride in his achievement and consequent encouragement for his future literary efforts.

62. Description. — The writing of description is far less valuable than the writing of dialogue. In fact, it would be better never to make an assignment in description than to handle it in the customary fashion. A student who is required to describe the children's playground or skating on the river will probably feel that he is just piling up words for their own sake and will naturally wonder whether the mechanical effort to illustrate some statement in his rhetoric can be of any conceivable benefit to himself or anybody else. An assignment in description may be made only if it can be given some definite point. Such definite point is inherent in the subject, "How Students Study." If the subject is given out several days ahead, the class will have plenty of opportunity for observation in the library or the study hall and for selection of three or four outstanding types. The papers that come in will seem to have been written with the eye on the object, whether that object is the whispering girl who disturbs all her neighbors, or the boy who would like to study but cannot hold to any one thing, or the girl whose chief concern is her pocket mirror and powder puff, or the true worker who cannot be diverted. In the same

way the subject "A Bargain Sale" is more likely to interest if it can be directed not merely to picturing a mob of women who crowd, push, and shove, but also to showing the folly of paying a high price in temper and time in order to save a few cents.

63. **Letter Writing.** — Practice in letter writing connected with various situations should be emphasized in the junior high school and should not be omitted from any year of the senior high school. While the formal conventions of letter writing should become a matter of habit through dictation exercises, they should be given application through original letters. Like all other composition practice, letter writing is far more fruitful when combined with theory. Class discussion should develop the immense consequences that a letter may sometimes have, the desirability of clear conversational language free from repetition, and the great advantage to be gained from imagining oneself the recipient of the letter that one is writing. Students should be advised to judge their writing of letters by asking themselves such questions as these:

Have I been direct and definite in the points that I present?
Have I shown a correct understanding of my relation to the recipient of my letter?
Have I been courteous in putting requests?
Have I steered clear of any expression that might give offense?
Have I answered inquiries that the recipient has put to me?
Have I acknowledged letters and parcels that I have received?
Have I been duly cordial in recognition of favors shown me?

These are only a few of many questions that might be

suggested by a lively class discussion. In connection with standards for letter writing the teacher may point out some of the essentials of good style. He has a first-rate chance to show how the hackneyed expression is disagreeable and often appears insincere and how a simple fresh phrasing indicates the spontaneous feeling and the unstudied impulse. He may touch on the supreme necessity of restraint in letters of condolence. Students should be asked to bring remarkably tactful letters which their parents have received and which are not too confidential for public reading.

After full discussion of theory a particular project should be selected. Perhaps the class will discover for the purpose some type of letter which causes many people embarrassment and perplexity. At various times the projects might be an apology for forgetting an appointment, a gracious response to an apology, an application for a position, a request for a special examination, a request to a busy and possibly reluctant friend to serve on a committee, a conciliatory refusal to serve on a committee, a discontinuance of a newspaper subscription, a tactful explanation of failure to contribute to some cause, a letter of thanks for a book that has been borrowed, a letter of thanks for a recommendation to a position, a letter to a Congressman about a bill in which one is interested. Some authorities may object to the artificial character of letters written concerning imaginary situations. The fact is, however, that there is no other way to give broad enough practice. The writing of short semi-business letters connected with numerous possible problems has great value in proportion to the time expended. Letters written should be on standard station-

ery, should be folded according to standard form, should be placed in envelopes with address, and should be attached to the general collection of themes.

XIII. SUBJECTS FOR STORIES

When students are given sufficient help, they take great pleasure in writing stories. The teacher should help by providing the plots. Possible plots are found in ordinary conflicts and contests and also in the incidents told by students.

64. **The story ready made.** — Pupils of almost any age enjoy writing, as they enjoy reading, stories. Beginners need to use comparatively simple plots. A successful subject that has within itself all the fundamental elements of a story is a physical or an intellectual contest. Any game is a story ready-made, enlisting partisan sympathy and furnishing suspense and solution. There is the additional advantage that young people are interested in football, basket ball, and baseball. About the only help needed from a teacher will be some hints as to ways of increasing sympathy and suspense. Students of those schools that hold public speaking contests have another large field of material for stories. They can easily put life into such stories through the dialogue preceding the orations or debates and through the description of dress, bearing, manner and gestures. Similarly any election contest, whether it be the election of class officers, of officers in a club or society, or of a county school superintendent, is a story complete in itself with a thousand possibilities in the way of development and elaboration. It is easy to contrast the rival candidates and to work out a solution that is both logical and surprising.

65. **The story from oral narration.** — Plot material of singular freshness and interest may often be derived from the incidents narrated by students in an oral composition assignment. It is true, indeed, that a teacher hearing from thirty-five to forty oral narratives may discover in the entire number only one or two plots of real promise. One or two excellent plots, however, will suffice because ordinarily one story in a school year is quite enough for a student to write. The teacher should scrutinize the various incidents in order to find possibilities for writing good dialogue, for heightening suspense, and for securing a novel and unexpected culmination. He will sometimes hit upon a special twist that will turn a commonplace incident into an effective story. Occurrences derived from life always have sufficient inherent probability, as is illustrated in the following narrative by a high school senior:

Until I was a high school junior, I lived in a very small town. As I was the only girl in a family of boys, I had been much petted and admired. I had early shown a talent for mimicry and humorous description. I had mimicked almost every peculiar and prominent person in the small town where I lived. During my high school sophomore year my brother ran for the office of county collector. One of the methods which he used in getting votes was to invite people to take dinner with us. One Saturday morning I had happened to be at the high school building when rural teachers were taking examinations for certificates. At our dinner table that noon were four or five men whom my brother had invited. I began a humorous description of various green teachers. I gave an especially ludicrous account of a fat woman who was asking many questions. Finally one of our guests remarked, "That was my sister." When the din-

ner was ended, my brother told me that I had ruined his chances as the visitor had more political influence than anybody else. We lost all hope, but the election returns showed that in spite of the enmity of our guest, my brother won the election by a margin of five votes.

Students can easily handle the dialogue of such a story and can increase interest by picturing the appalling consternation resulting from the girl's blunder.[8]

XIV. EXPOSITORY AND ARGUMENTATIVE SUBJECTS

The power to write exposition and argument is constantly needed in life. Except in the case of distinctly limited pupils training in such writing has large utility. The types of writing done should include the editorial, the essay, the oration, and the debate.

66. The expository paragraph. — We must give some training also in exposition and argument. If we were to be guided solely by the sort of compositions that young students can write most successfully, our assignments would be chiefly autobiographical sketches and brief stories. We should bear in mind, however, that the average person in adult society needs more often to write exposition than to write stories. Since exposition is difficult, it is best to make a beginning by team work. The teacher places on the blackboard some simple statement such as the sentence, "Each day means progress in aviation." He calls for ideas developing the paragraph topic and makes an attempt to secure some distinct contribution from every member of the class. The class judgment decides which proofs, examples, or restatements are most effective, and which arrangement is

[8] Suitable plots for stories are given on pages 172–175.

climactic. After discussion a student writes the paragraph on the board as the class dictate the sentences. When the paragraph is finished, criticism and emendation are continued. Revision proceeds until the class, guided by the teacher, are unable to suggest further improvement. Though the exercise takes at least a period, it yields large returns because it clarifies the principles of paragraph construction. The students cease to think of unity, coherence, emphasis, transition, proportion, and forcible conclusion as hard rhetorical names and conceive of them as practical necessities inseparable from straight true thinking. From the joint exercise some who have disliked composition learn to find the material within the subject and, knowing how to go about the work, acquire a liking for it.

Team work on the expository paragraph is preparatory to the writing of brief editorials. Students may be given an opportunity to express whatever views they may have about school privileges, school entertainments, the conduct of school assemblies, the relation of societies and clubs to the general life of the school, methods of conducting examinations, and similar questions. Much more should they be encouraged to form and state opinions about large social and political questions. They are too often timid and cautious in expressing themselves and too fearful of being in the minority. Hence, a teacher of liberal mind has a marvelous opportunity to encourage initiative and independent thinking and expression. He can show the students that the interest of persuasive composition is directly proportioned to intensity of conviction.

67. The familiar essay. — A type of expository writing which is suitable to the last two years of the high school course is the conversational humorous essay. Usually the teacher should suggest not merely the subject but also possible subdivisions. For instance, students will do better work on such a subject as "Social Pretenders" if a suggestion is made that they give one paragraph to pretenses about wealth, a second paragraph to pretenses concerning ancestry and family standing, and a third paragraph to pretenses about reading or education. They can write humorously on such a subject as "My Relations" if they are given such subtopics as "dictatorial relations," "constantly visiting relations," and "excessively critical relations." Students have plenty of material for such a subject as "Neighbors" if they are reminded of various types: the borrowing neighbor; the prying neighbor; the noisy neighbor; the ideally fair and generous neighbor.

68. The formal essay. — The formal essay necessitates library research and means heavy expenditure of both class and study time. As a type of high school composition it is justified because it gives valuable training in organization. The subject used should be a vital one of current interest such as "Modern Uses of Electricity," "A Study of Cartoons," or "American Periodicals." The treatment of such a subject as "American Periodicals" leads to intimacy with a great number of magazines. It involves consideration of all modern problems and of many new ideas. It results in information about living authors, scientists, and statesmen. It tends to overcome narrowness and to interest the student

in social changes. It will be an influence affecting his thought and reading after he leaves the high school.

69. Orations and debates. — The subjects of orations and debates prepared for public delivery should vary in accordance with the advancement of the class.[9] The five-minute oration by ninth grade students should deal with some comparatively simple theme such as "The Playground Movement" or "The Value of Public Speaking" or "Better Motion Pictures." Orations by juniors and seniors may deal with any social or political theory that has emotional appeal. Exceedingly technical problems such as "Taxation" or "Tariff Revision" should be avoided. Such subjects as "The Horrors of the Next War," "Fair Treatment of the Negro" and "Prison Reform" are admirable because they afford great variety of arguments and because they appeal to humanitarian motives. Both the research and the writing on subjects of a political or economic nature have intense interest for mature high school students and constitute ideal training in citizenship.

The written debate including the writing of rebuttals is fortunately receiving more emphasis in high school teaching. Since it is a preparation for the oral public debate, it is motivated by the element of contest. Present day problems of government that can be given definite statement constitute the best subjects. The great advantage of debating is that it requires conviction and fervor, and that it absolutely avoids dangers associated with propaganda and special pleading. Since the teacher encourages each side

[9] Inexperienced teachers who are called on to work out plans for class day or other commencement programs may derive help from Ruth Evelyn Henderson, "A Last Glance Back," *English Journal*, XV, 209–215.

to make a strong case, he can hardly be charged with attempting to bias the minds of his students. While he remains neutral, he can stimulate them to unparalleled effort.[10]

XV. IMITATIVE COMPOSITIONS

Composition work makes a very heavy demand on creative power. Consequently, some of our assignments should depend more on imitation than on invention. The literature which students have read suggests various imitative themes.

70. **Value of imitative composition.** — The greater number of the compositions assigned should deal with original themes and should be the outgrowth of experience and observation. But there should also be some imitative exercises connected with literature. Many writers of high distinction have emphasized the value of imitative exercises. Everybody is familiar with Franklin's method of training himself by reading *Spectator* papers and then rewriting them and everybody knows that Franklin is unsurpassed in mastery of forcible English. Paul Elmer More in his essay on Franklin speaks of the method as "on the whole one of the best of disciplines, better, I think, than the system of themes now employed in our colleges." Stevenson's practice in imitating nearly a dozen different writers is as generally known. His refutation of the theoretical objection deserves particular attention:

> Perhaps I hear some one cry out: "But that is not the way to be original." It is not; nor is there a way but to be born so.

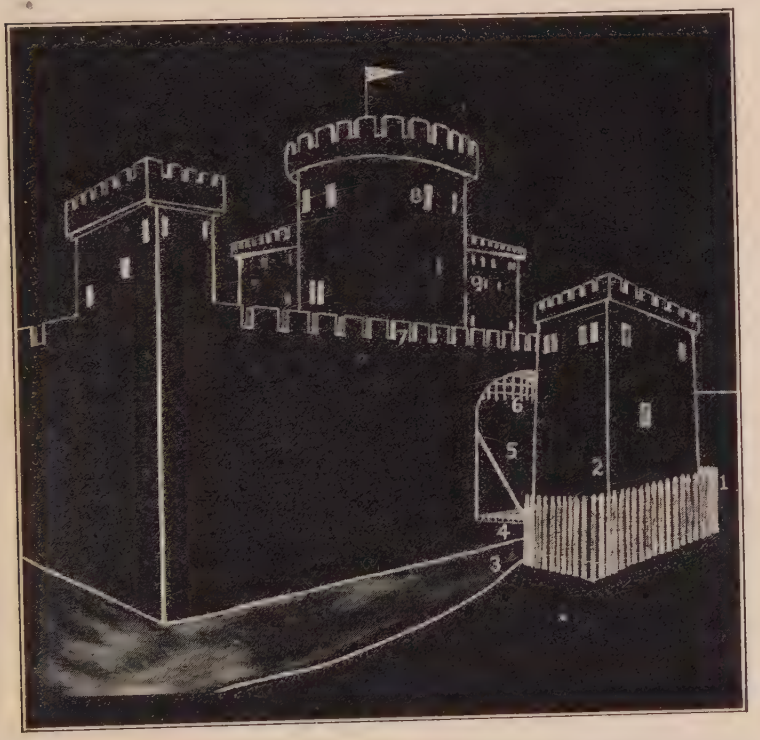
[10] For suggestions concerning brief-making, for an illustrative brief, and for some debate questions, see pages 177–182.

Nor yet, if you are born original, is there anything in this training that shall clip the wings of your originality.

Such words have the greater force because they come from one who said in reference to himself that "no man ever had made slighter literary gifts go farther." But even if we did not have such remarkable testimonials, would not reasoning from the very nature of the case prove the advantage of some imitative composition? The unskilled writer modestly recognizes that his brain is not prolific and he is consequently afraid of the effort that must be devoted to invention. He dreads a constant draft upon his limited experience. He is painfully conscious that he has no bank account in the way of original thought, that he never has anything to deposit, and that he must constantly draw checks. He is embarrassed in facing the double difficulties of thought and language. When the material is in part provided, he feels such a sense of relief as facilitates his task. He is able to give more attention to choice of words and to form of sentences.

71. **Types of imitative writing.** — A very easy sort of imitative composition is the narration of a story or a part of a story with changed point of view. Tenth grade students who have read *Ivanhoe* will enjoy writing "Cedric's Story of the Assault on the Castle." The plan may assume that immediately after the wedding of Ivanhoe and Rowena at Rotherwood Cedric is asked by some of the guests to give a connected account of his experiences during the siege. Cedric naturally begins with the conflicting emotions that he felt when he was escorted by Front-de-Boeuf across the moat to the sally-port of the barbican and thence

was dismissed to join the besieging party in the open field. As a member of the besieging army, he describes the approach to the castle, the vigorous attack on the palisades, the



BLACKBOARD DRAWING OF FRONT-DE-BOEUF'S CASTLE

The drawing was used to work out the composition project, "Cedric's Story of the Assault on the Castle." 1. Palisades; 2. Barbican; 3. Moat; 4. Drawbridge; 5. Postern gate; 6. Portcullis; 7. Battlements; 8. Rebecca's outlook; 9. Donjon.

bravery of the Black Knight in the encounter with Front-de-Boeuf near the drawbridge, and the successful capture of the barbican. His recital then proceeds to the launching

of the raft, the passage over the moat with extreme peril from missiles, the unexpected opening of the postern gate, the defeat of De Bracy by the Black Knight, the entrance into the castle, the rescue of Rowena, and the despair concerning Athelstane's fate. The story is an altogether different one from that given by Scott, who mainly tells how the conflict appeared to Rebecca. It allows free range to the imagination and brings into play a graphic and vivid vocabulary that has not been used previously by most of the class.

A type of composition which involves a somewhat larger element of originality is the writing of an additional chapter for a novel. On the other hand, the writing of an omitted scene of a play is not a good exercise both because the difficulties are greater and also because a fine drama already contains the indispensable scenes in which will clashes with will. Most novels omit some scenes that have extraordinary power to reveal character and to keep the plot moving. Such an omitted scene, which is really an essential part of *Treasure Island,* is the first interview between the doctor and Ben Gunn. Stevenson unquestionably gained suspense by omitting the scene; he relinquished a splendid opportunity for characterization. Youngsters delight in writing the scene as "Chapter Twenty-two and One-half: Narrative resumed by the Doctor: An Interview with Ben Gunn." They can easily understand and consistently interpret such a character as Ben Gunn. They will be triumphant in reproducing the contrast between his stammering dialect and the doctor's clear correct decisive speech. They can attain some genuinely sympathetic humor in describing the old sailor's awkwardness, his fears, and his ulti-

mate confidence in a "gentleman born." They have ample material for dialogue in the pleading of Ben Gunn and in the information which he gradually gives the doctor in regard to the hidden treasure. Such a composition assignment may be made in connection with the study of any great novel. High school sophomores have enough inventiveness to work out a new first chapter for *Ivanhoe*. The paper may be entitled "Chapter One: Father and Son." Subject matter is at hand in the widely different views of Cedric and Ivanhoe concerning the possibility of restoring the English royal line and of uniting Athelstane in marriage with Rowena. The quarrel reaches its culmination in the departure of Ivanhoe to join the standard of Richard.

A form of imitative writing which is interesting to juniors or seniors is making a novelette based on a drama. Of course, tragedy must never be used, but serious drama as well as comedy is available for the purpose. Seniors who have read Ibsen's *A Doll's House* can work out a novelette in which Mrs. Linden is the narrator. Probably the first chapter will tell of Mrs. Linden's acquaintance with Nora in girlhood and of Nora's complete dependence on her father. Later chapters will unfold the progress of Helmer's intimacy with Nora and will tell the story of the engagement and wedding. The final chapter will cover the three days of anxiety which constitute the period of Ibsen's play. From this type of work students derive the clearest understanding of the difference between the methods of the novelist and those of the playwright.

The only imitative composition based on condensation

rather than on expansion is the précis.[11] Précis writing is steadily gaining vogue. The précis is a brief statement of the essentials of a paragraph or longer article. It is not a substitute for other types of written composition but it has its own peculiar values. It affords training in intelligent reading and interpretation. It tends to develop habits of concentration and clear thinking. It is especially useful as a test of language mastery. From it a teacher may gain immediate knowledge of his students. On the first day when he meets his composition class, he places on the board a sonnet or some slightly longer subtle poem. He then requests each student to write the gist of the poem. He may announce fifty words as the maximum word limit and forty words as the preferred length. He should allow time enough for one revision. From the précis he may form speedy and accurate judgment of each student. The précis shows whether the student has the power to feel emphasis and to grasp suggestions and implications and whether he has command of the needed vocabulary. With just a little training the slow-witted as well as the able thinkers make most gratifying improvement in writing the précis. The brevity of the exercise makes it possible for the teacher to read to the class various samples and to secure general criticism. Class discussion of the merits of each précis leads on the next occasion to sharper observation and to more definite and effective statement.

[11] See Samuel Thurber, *Précis Writing for American Schools* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1924).

XVI. SPECIAL COMPOSITION PROJECTS

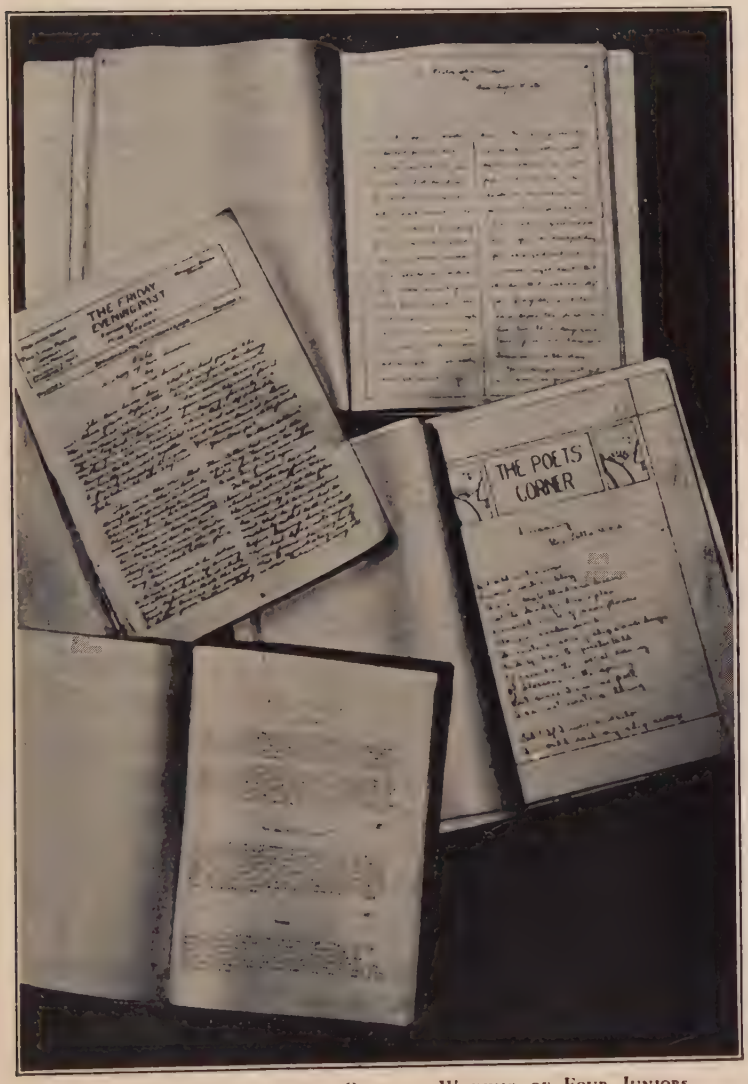
The ideal composition teacher does not depend mainly on cut and dried plans but is on the alert for suggestions from the general life of the community. Projects of special interest include feature writing and the making of books and magazines. We shall note a few subjects that ought to be avoided.

72. **Feature writing.** — A teacher of juniors or seniors may initiate a class in feature writing provided he exercises great tact and judgment. He should himself propose some general subject which is entirely safe, such as "Plans for Beautifying Our Town." He should obtain from the students different subjects directly connected with the community. He should call attention to different types of feature writing in newspapers. He may explain that we are eager to know about the life and opinions of people who have had unusual experiences or who have triumphed in spite of extraordinary obstacles. He should issue the warning that we have no right to press such people for information or to use in an unauthorized way information given us. He should request students who can find some special subject for a "human interest" story to submit their plans individually. Those who do not submit special plans should be expected to work on the relatively safe subject which the teacher has assigned.

73. **Book-making.** — The book-making project has sometimes had valuable results. According to the plan each member of the class works out one chapter of a little book that can be filed in the library. To illustrate, in a certain small high school within a mining district the class wrote a book on the subject, *Lead and Zinc Mines of* .....

District. The various chapters dealt with the early history of the mines, the mining process, the uses of the finished product, the relations between mine owners and miners, and the educational and social conditions among the miners. A very easy kind of book project consists in making a novel of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Chapters might bear such titles as "Early Memories of Celia," "The Wrestling Match," "A Rash Venture," "The Long Journey," "The Simple Life," "The Meeting of Aliena and Orlando," "The Audacious Plan of Rosalind," "Diversions of Forest Life," "A Love Letter and the Answer," "The Broken Promise," "The Triumph of Ganymede." If the number of possible chapters is smaller than the number in the class, the class can be divided into groups and can thus make three or four different books. Each student should present the plans and organization of his chapter for criticism by other students and by the teacher. Students should compare and discuss styles of editing. Those who own kodaks should be encouraged to add to the attractiveness of the finished book by contributing suitable pictures.

74. **The magazine project.** — The magazine project affords a greater variety of work than does book-making. The interest which it inspires may lead to the attainment of high excellence. At the beginning of the school year each student is advised to save all his best writing in order to make an individual magazine. The composition assignments throughout the year are purposely varied so that the collected material will represent in a general way the contents of an average magazine. The finished magazine may comprise the student's best essay, a story, several editorials, one



MAGAZINES CONTAINING THE ORIGINAL WRITING OF FOUR JUNIORS

Open pages show a war story, "Pals"; a sketch by "Ann Awful Writer," called "A Photographic Ordeal"; a humorous poem by "Lotta Work"; three book reviews.

or more very short reviews of recent books, a humor section that includes a parody or other bit of humorous verse as well as school jokes culled during the year. The student naturally takes pride in the artistic form of his magazine as well as in meritorious and entertaining contents.

75. **Co-operative projects.** — In certain phases of composition work, the English department may co-operate with the science, the political science, and the sociology departments. Because these departments deal with tendencies of the present day and because they look to the future, they have an unusual supply of material for original writing. Since composition work is a very difficult task and since in a difficult task consideration of interest must be paramount, it is doubtful whether a theme dealing with past time should ever be assigned. Sometimes, however, a theme connected with contemporary events may do double duty as an English and as a history paper. Subjects derived from biology, physics, and chemistry should be used to an increasing degree. In many cases the history or the science teacher can give valuable assistance on sources and on subject matter.

76. **Unsatisfactory subjects.** — It is apparent that the number of profitable kinds of writing is legion. Consequently, there is no need at any time of making unprofitable assignments. Probably the assignment of such essay subjects as "Friendship" or "Hope" belongs in the category of pedagogical crimes no longer perpetrated. But egregious blunders in choice of subjects are still common. Not infrequently teachers assign the writing of biographical sketches. Such an assignment is open to the gravest objections because the time order of biography makes original organization

impossible. Similarly, written paraphrases should never be required. Anybody who has once suffered the agony of being required to write some beautiful poetry as prose will be quite safe from ever inflicting that agony on another. Except for specific purposes summaries are undesirable. Another ill-advised type of assignment is the imitation of classics written in antique style. While special encouragement ought to be given to any one inclined to write humorous verse or parodies, the writing of verse should never be required.

Besides subjects which afford little stimulation or training, there are some subjects that may be harmful either because they give false literary standards or because they have an unfortunate influence. Plots of a preachy moralizing goody-goody type must be avoided because they are fundamentally untrue to life. For the same reason that students should not be permitted to stage a tragedy, they should be advised not to write a story with a tragic ending. They cannot adequately conceive or represent great grief or passion. They should be discouraged from writing a love story unless they should wish to treat humorously the superficial aspects. Some subjects involve the danger of pointed personal reference. Since in assigning a character sketch from life a teacher is working for humor and even caricature, he should specifically exclude the description of any other teacher in the town. He must be on his guard against unprofessionalism. Some plots that might be given for stories are questionable because of their suggestiveness. A certain teacher assigned a story about an organized cut or strike of students. Who would deny that the organized cut which occurred

later in the year may have been partly due to the influence of that story? Of all subjects fraught with danger the one in widest use is what many teachers designate as the "book review." In reality it is nothing but a detailed and lengthy summary of a plot. It is of course needless to say that there is no objection to the assignment of a genuine review or a varied discussion of a recent book which has not been used as a theme in previous classes. But the so-called "book review" is a temptation to dishonorable practices. Since high school students read the same standard novels, such as *The Spy* or *Jane Eyre* or *Kidnapped,* the requirement of written "book reviews" is a direct and frequent cause of plagiarism. The "book review" which has been written by a student under one teacher is too often lent or sold to a student in some other teacher's class. Since we have countless subjects of high excellence, there is no reason for making assignments that lead to unhappy consequences.

XVII. MATERIAL FOR WRITING

The teacher of written composition must be responsible for seeing that students have a wealth of material or know quite definitely how to get it. The failure of some teachers to recognize this responsibility has caused many earnest and willing workers to think of composition as a repugnant and fruitless task. We shall consider several available methods by which the teacher may give aid toward obtaining material.

77. **The need for material.** — After the composition project has been carefully selected, effort should be concentrated on accumulating subject matter. The fundamental principle underlying all successful teaching of composition

is that students must have an ample supply of ideas before they begin to write. Newman, Pater, and many other distinguished authorities tell us that nothing so much contributes to excellent style as does wealth of thought. We cannot force originality by leaving children unprovided with ideas and then demanding that they produce finished themes. In days gone by composition was a terror because it meant the completing a tale of bricks without straw. A city principal tells of a childhood experience which she still recalls with horror: she was assigned the subject, "What might have been," and was then expected to cudgel her brains until an essay should emerge. Today we recognize that composition work must be so directed that it will have a stimulating, not a paralyzing effect.

78. **Ways of getting material.** — Of the various ways in which the needed ideas may be secured, the class discussion is foremost. In conducting such a discussion the teacher can bring into play almost every talent or power that he possesses. If he is tactful and adroit in his appeal to the class, he can obtain an astonishing range of contributions. If the subject is of the simplest sort, such as a personal experience, diffident writers are encouraged by getting from the more independent thinkers a number of suggestions as to what might well be included. Or, if the teacher gives the plot of a story, the class will plan detailed treatment. Suppose that the teacher suggests for the problem of a story an effort made by a village to get bonds voted for better schools. When he asks for material, the class will propose for leading characters the rich skinflint and the altruistic school superintendent. Some good mimics in the class can

show how a stingy taxpayer might talk and they will thus give everybody hints for providing humor.

In preparing for expository writing, class discussion is equally serviceable. To assist in the expository paragraph the three most useful questions are these:

What proofs have you that this idea is true ?
In what ways can you rephrase this identical idea ?
What examples of this idea have come to your observation ?

One benefit of such class discussion is that students learn to put these same questions to themselves successfully when they are working alone. The pupils of a certain brilliant high school teacher say that they have no trouble in writing exposition because they have learned that a paragraph may consist of a topic, three examples, and a clincher. They have discovered that examples are easy to find and always interesting. Such work on the paragraph helps in the writing of the essay. The topics of the various paragraphs should often be considered and selected by the entire class. If a class were to write on the subject, "Shakespeare's Contrast of Brutus and Cassius," responses to questioning would suggest these distinctions for paragraph topics: the superiority of Cassius over Brutus in practical judgment; the opportunism of Cassius and the lofty idealism of Brutus; the petulance of Cassius and the self-control of Brutus; the greater range of sympathies and imagination belonging to Brutus; the dominant influence and personal ascendancy of Brutus. Interpretations may be kept constantly true by the requirement that the proof passages be cited in connection with every comment. There is no need to fear that

the discussion may limit the more original writers. Rather does it kindle in their thought many trains of association and awaken their pride in going beyond the class suggestions.

A second method of providing material is found in the joint bibliography. This method is helpful in work on current scientific, literary, political, social, and economic questions. The teacher gives instruction in the use of the library card catalogue and of the index to periodicals. He may economize the time of students inexperienced in research by distributing the different years of the index among the different members of the class. The bibliography notebook is kept on the desk in the English room. Any student recording a reference writes also his own name so that he may receive due credit for the reference and may be understood to vouch for the value of the material. No one should add a reference without having ascertained that it is suggestive. Every student should be encouraged to make from books or from periodicals some contributions to the general bibliography. The plan saves the time of the individual, gives every one some practice in research, and places within reach an admirable list of sources. The reading of references by all the class should begin simultaneously with the making of the bibliography. Those to whom the work is new learn from the contributions of the skillful that material bearing indirectly on the subject is the most valuable kind.

In the consolidated or village high school where library facilities are meagre, the difficulties of such work are great but they are not insurmountable. An enthusiastic teacher can persuade each of the high school students to contribute

fifty cents toward a fund for magazines. Thus for the sum of thirty or forty dollars a year a fair supply of judiciously selected magazines may be provided. Although the students lack the valuable help of the index, they have in the eight or ten periodicals a large range of ideas and facts available for the treatment of many subjects of current interest.

A third method of providing material is through oral composition. Oral composition is chiefly helpful in the case of rather long papers. It must always be preceded by broad general class discussion. Let us suppose that we assign a junior or a senior class the subject, "American Periodicals." If there are thirty-five or forty students in the class each of these topics may be assigned to a group of three or four students:

(1) American periodicals have become exceedingly numerous and correspond in quality to the diversity of Americans in intelligence.

(2) The most important kinds are these: the weekly; the general monthly magazine; the monthly magazine devoted to a specialty.

(3) Periodicals aid literary creation by providing a field for new talent as is illustrated by the *Atlantic*, *Scribner's*, *Harper's*, the *Century*.

(4) Periodicals give information about contemporary literature both through book lists and through discriminating book reviews: such reviews are found in the *Nation* and in the *Bookman*.

(5) Personal recollections written by those who have taken part in famous movements are often given to the public through *Current History*, the *Atlantic*, and other magazines.

(6) Periodicals, such as *Time,* the *Outlook,* the *Forum,* and many others give valuable guidance to voters.

(7) Some periodicals, such as the *Survey,* promote social progress by calling attention to deplorable conditions and by pointing out possible improvements.

(8) Many periodicals, such as the *National Geographic,* are powerful forces in creating international sympathy.

(9) Such periodicals as the *Literary Digest,* the *Popular Science Monthly, Science* have a most important place as a direct means of school education.

(10) Any person who becomes familiar with fifteen or twenty good periodicals acquires many sources of pleasure and many new interests.

The four students who have the same paragraph topic do not confer but work quite independently. Each student searches for proofs and illustrations of his topic idea, for any good material that is relevant and produces a carefully organized paragraph that can be spoken in less than two minutes. Experience demonstrates the surprising fact that such an oral composition exercise is never monotonous or tiresome but is intensely interesting. The oral exercise is of great aid to writing because everybody has the opportunity to hear four different discussions of each topic before he writes his essay. If students are not permitted to take any notes, they will naturally be original as far as phrasing is concerned but they will have received much help in finding material and in organizing it. The plan is one that tends to keep written composition from seeming irksome.

XVIII. FINAL PREPARATION FOR WRITING

After the student has plenty of material, attention should be given to outlining and to the application of a few basic rhetorical principles. At times there may be class practice on one of the paragraph topics. The teacher should be prepared to give either additional material or helpful advice just before the writing.

79. Outlining. — Whenever students write a complex argument or exposition, a careful outline should be made.[12] As soon as the teacher is sure that the students have read widely, he may ask them to prepare tentative outlines. He should explain the importance of clean-cut division, of division according to one principle, and of arrangement that conduces to straight movement and steady progress in thought. He may allow himself one day for criticizing all the tentative outlines and for working out the best possible analysis of the material. He should not give his own outline to the class, but taking a full period, should develop by class discussion an improved outline. This development means a splendid chance to teach structure and the principles of logical and climactic order. It is a natural opportunity to reënforce the teaching of some general rhetorical principles. While English teachers today are greatly perplexed about many phases of their work, they seem to agree that rhetorical theory is too generally neglected. It is a significant fact that students later attach very high value to instruction in grammar and rhetoric.[13] Of course, what-

[12] An illustrative outline for exposition is given on pages 175–177.

[13] A written opinion was secured from eighty-eight Kansas City high school English teachers as to which of these types of work is generally in greatest danger of neglect in proportion to its importance: 1. Study of language, grammar, and rhetoric; 2. Dictation exercises and spelling; 3. Outlining and

ever rhetorical theory is taught in connection with composition must be helpful, not burdensome.[14] In the matter of organization the teacher should follow the leading of the class and yet must prevent illogical grouping or loose and ambiguous phrasing. In formulating the joint outline, the writing on the board should be done by a pupil so that the energy of the teacher may be given to securing class response. The joint outline should guide the entire class in writing the long paper.

80. Further suggestions about material. — After the completion of the joint outline, the class know definitely the number of paragraphs planned and the topic thought of each. Even at this stage the teacher should provide additional material if any lack is felt. A certain high school teacher is in the habit of saying to her class, "I will take a vote as to which paragraph topic you consider hardest to handle. I will talk at considerable length about the topic which gets the largest number of votes." She then gives so many illustrations and ideas about the selected topic that the students speedily regard it as the easiest and most attractive. Another way of furnishing additional material is through class practice on a paragraph. The teacher gives out a paragraph topic from the outline, possibly the sixth one in an outline calling for ten paragraphs and asks the class to write on this particular topic for fifteen or twenty minutes. At the end of this time he calls on five or six

organization; 4. Written composition; 5. Oral composition. No. 1 received 53% of the votes, No. 3 24% of the votes.

The senior class (numbering 331) of the Springfield, Missouri, High School gave a written answer to this question: Of the five kinds of work just named, which one has been worth most to you? No. 1 received 57% of the votes.

[14] For a comprehensive rhetoric review in the form of questions see pages 183–186.

especially original students to read their paragraphs aloud. Through his own reading of all the extemporaneous paragraphs, he can judge accurately the fluency and the creative power of each student.

If the preparation is in every way adequate, the students will need for writing even a long paper only one or two or three days. They should be urged to compose rapidly at white heat, to work in all their material and in writing the first draft not to be critical of words or sentences. They should be encouraged to read their themes aloud in revising and to form the habit of watching the ring of their sentences. In expository or argumentative composition they should be expected to prepare a summary by sentences as well as a copy of the preferred outline. A careless or illogical writer does much better work if he is required to state in a clear faultless sentence the comprehensive thought of each paragraph.

XIX. CRITICISM AND LATER USE OF THEMES

The teacher should read every theme and should criticize serious errors. The writer should then make corrections so that he may not repeat his mistakes in subsequent papers. The themes should be carefully preserved and should be made an incentive to attain still higher excellence.

81. Correction of Themes. — Every theme, long or short, should be criticized by the teacher and returned to the writer. Original papers should not be assigned unless the teacher can find the time for reading and criticizing them.[15] The practice of requiring papers which the teacher

[15] For incidental evidence that great numbers of themes received by the teacher are never read, see Allan Abbott, "The Special Function of the Head of the Department of English," *English Journal*, XI, 278.

never reads and never returns is less prevalent than formerly, but it is far more common than it ought to be. In grading themes consideration should be given both to interest and variety and also to correctness. Effort and improvement, in so far as these can be measured, may also come into the count. The judgment of compositions is necessarily subjective. There is no definite recipe prescribing how to grade a highly humorous theme that has considerable misspelling. Of course, a sensible teacher will judge errors relatively. In the case of a long paper with a rich full vocabulary used naturally, the misspelling of three or four words is much more excusable than in the case of a short paper with meager commonplace vocabulary. The teacher should refrain from marking points which are largely matters of opinion and divided usage. He should mark really grievous and unmistakable errors. Too many critics overlook sentence confusion and insert commas that are very dubious.[16] It is ordinarily quite useless to object to choice of phrasing unless the critic substitutes a better phrase.

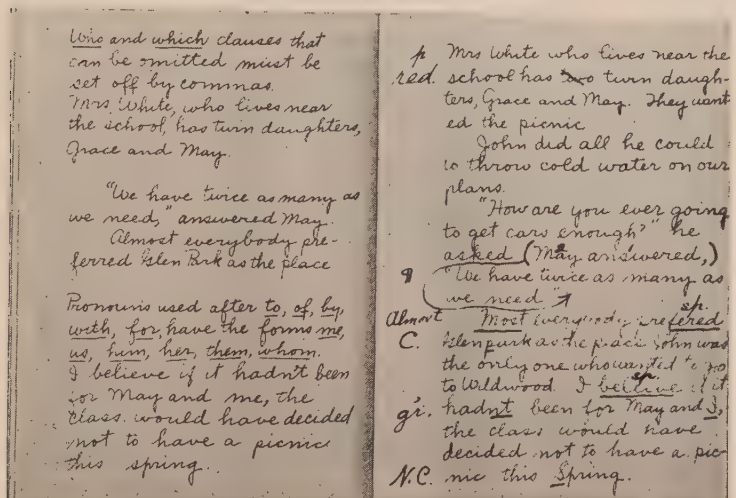
One aim of theme criticism is to prevent the recurrence of errors. By simple tabulation remedial measures on a group basis can be made to apply directly to the more frequent errors. For instance, a teacher may say, "Because you were writing about a character in a Shakespeare play, you have constantly interchanged the past and the present tense. I am going to explain the matter of consistency in tenses." Clear illustrations of mistakes may be quoted and presented to the entire class for correction. The class need not know

[16] For distressing disclosures of a highly scientific and brilliantly suggestive investigation see Sterling Andrus Leonard, "How English Teachers Correct Papers," *English Journal*, XII, 517–532.

what theme has furnished any particular faulty example. This sort of discussion greatly reduces the time needed for personal conferences and always holds the interest of pupils because it appears to them as eminently practical. A teacher who has a full schedule, large classes, and very little free time, can rapidly and successfully make valuable personal criticisms in class if he gives a secret number to each member of the class. He can keep these numbers in his grade book in such arrangement that they do not follow alphabetical order or any other order that would be easily apparent. Thus he will not seem to be unpleasantly personal when he announces in class, "Number twenty-four is not careful enough about a straight left-hand margin," or, "Number nine has been inaccurate in making correction after the last criticism." After the discussion of errors the themes may be returned and from five to ten minutes may be given to answering questions about corrections. A brief period during the noon hour or at the close of the day should also be set aside for further inquiries that students may wish to make. No teacher should permit his pupils to regard his criticisms as undecipherable hieroglyphics.

In order that the criticism may not be useless and that mistakes may not be repeated we should require the immediate return of the theme with complete revision of faulty sentences on the unused side of the sheet or on the opposite page. If a textbook reference is given for the rule or principle, not only should the sentence be rewritten but the main point of the textbook reference should be copied. Rewriting for the purpose of improving subject matter and literary effect should never be required but may often be

recommended. It is worth while only if there is exceptional motivation, such as may be due to a prize contest or to the eager ambition of a talented student. But the correction by every student of positive mistakes is indispensable. If this correction is not required, the average student intends to



Who and which clauses that can be omitted must be set off by commas.
Mrs. White, who lives near the school, has twin daughters, Grace and May.

"We have twice as many as we need," answered May.
Almost everybody preferred Glen Park as the place

Pronouns used after to, of, by, with, for, have the forms me, us, him, her, them, whom.
I believe if it hadn't been for May and me, the class would have decided not to have a picnic this spring.

p. red. Mrs White who lives near the school has ~~two~~ twin daughters, Grace and May. They wanted the picnic
John did all he could to throw cold water on our plans.
"How are you ever going to get cars enough?" he asked (May answered,)
g "We have twice as many as we need."
Almost C. Most everybody preferred Glen park as the place. John was the only one who wanted to go to Wildwood. I believe if it gi. hadn't been for May and I, the class would have decided not to have a pic-
N.C. nic this Spring.

A Junior High School Composition Folder

The right-hand page shows the first writing, with the teacher's criticisms; the left-hand page, corrections made by the pupil with citation of principles.

study the teacher's criticisms, but he never does. Let teachers be consistent in securing careful rewriting of sentences involving definite mistakes. They will soon cease to complain about the constant recurrence of errors previously criticized.

82. Later use of themes. — The teacher should select for class reading four or five papers of signal excellence. He should embrace any possible opportunity to honor in this

way mediocre students who through special effort have attained high grade results. It should be needless to say that he must never make his selection until he has read all the themes. He should request the writers of the best papers to practise reading them until they can read them most effectively. Of course, it must be understood that no one is expected to read publicly material that is more or less confidential and personal. In such a case the teacher announces, "So-and-so wrote a very interesting story but for personal reasons preferred that it should not be read aloud." Commendation of good papers should be distributed as widely as is possible so that it will operate as an incentive to the entire class.

Original compositions showing correction by the writers should be preserved during the entire school year for reference and for public exhibition. The loose-leaf notebook with a stiff paper cover is a cheap, convenient, and satisfactory form of theme file. The requirement that all themes be carefully preserved has several distinct advantages. It increases the probability that work will be done honestly. It makes possible the comparison of work done by different students. In the second place, it gives the teacher a chance to look over completed work at any time and to judge the progress of any particular student. In the third place, it causes students to take more pains with both form and substance. Thus it contributes to the development of a worthy pride in self-expression.

We have now considered the chief problems and the definite procedure connected with teaching composition in the

high school. Certain phases of the subject are of such vast importance that they should stand out prominently in our thought. The ambitious aim is to teach writing so that through it students may readily communicate their opinions, may entertain others, and may exert a dynamic influence over others. A subordinate aim is indirectly to raise speech to a much higher level. Every effort must be made to find natural social situations for writing and to accumulate ample material on the subjects used. Subjects should be varied and stimulating and to a great extent should be connected with vital tendencies of the present moment. Even if written composition must be limited in amount, it is an indispensable part of a liberal education.

MATERIAL FOR SHORT STORY PROJECTS

Students in the Methods class should select one of the following plots for use as a high school story. They should then read those chapters of a high school composition text which deal with description and narration and should consider what theoretical principles can be definitely applied to the plot on which all are concentrating. Then let some member of the Methods class become the teacher of the class (the real instructor assisting if need arises), and conduct a development discussion working out all details of the story. Every possible source of interest should be considered. Various members of the Methods class will contribute concrete details that will make the story lifelike. Perhaps some can suggest ways of increasing suspense or introducing touches of humor. The joint discussion will

give each member of the class confidence in undertaking for the first time a similar project with high school pupils.

1. A very bright attractive girl had become egotistical and dictatorial. Her opinions had always been accepted by her parents and younger sisters as conclusive. Her family moved to a larger town where she attended the central high school. Dorothy continued her habit of giving advice. Some of her schoolmates, becoming weary of her dictation, decided to cure her. Within the space of two or three days every one of them asked her opinion about dress or entertainment or school activities. Not until more than a dozen had humbly consulted her did she begin to suspect a plot. When her friends confessed, she was at first furiously angry but ultimately accepted the device as a very just criticism.

2. Mr. A had for some time been superintendent of schools in White County. He was a man of little education who had maintained his hold through wire pulling. The time for election drew near. Mr. G announced himself as a rival candidate. Each man conducted an energetic campaign. Mr. G urged higher standards for rural teaching. Mr. G became suspicious that Mr. A was offering several prominent people inducements equivalent to bribery. Mr. F was a man who controlled a large number of votes. Mr. G found that Mr. A and Mr. F were to meet in a certain room of the Arlington Hotel. He persuaded the proprietor of the Arlington to let him install a dictograph. The dictograph proved that Mr. A was bribing Mr. F to bring him votes. The record of the dictograph was published. Thus the election of Mr. G was assured.

3. A new preacher with his family had come to the church in the town of M——. After they had been in the town about three months, Mrs. Smith, the chief gossip in the church, went one morning to the parsonage. Before she knocked, she could

hear through the open window some excited conversation. She heard the preacher's wife say, "I want to keep the children with me." At the Ladies' Aid Society that afternoon, the gossip hinted her suspicion that the preacher and his wife were arranging a separation. The preacher was away the following Sunday. The story spread and the minister's wife became extremely self-conscious. In the course of two weeks after the prospective divorce had been discussed in all its aspects by the entire town, the news transpired that the preacher had been left a large legacy by a distant relative. The excited conversation had been caused by the sudden necessity for a long trip to the home of the relative.

4. One day when John was driving with his sister on a lonely road, he needed gas. His sister pointed out a filling station half a mile away. When John reached the place a beautiful blonde girl came out and gave him the gas. The next day John purchased a new suit and a new tie. Two days later when he was wearing these and had brought out his carefully cleaned car, his sister asked if she might accompany him. He gave a grudging assent. After all kinds of difficulty on a rocky road they reached the same filling station. Instead of the blonde girl a slovenly woman weighing three hundred pounds appeared. John asked her how long she had had the filling station. "Bought it two days ago," she answered. John never again traveled so remote a road to get gas. In connection with this incident what additional humorous touches can you introduce to show the effect of a temporary infatuation ?

5. In the Washington High School there had never been secret societies. A wealthy and influential family moved to the town. The daughter of this family immediately tried to organize some fraternities and sororities in the high school. Though she and her friends were cautious and politic, many students felt the element of snobbishness in the movement. Most of those who were opposed to the organizations were too timid to express their

views. When the leaders of the movement asked the help of the principal, he stated that there must be full discussion by the entire student body before the organizations could be formed. In the meeting which was held, L, who was of a remarkably independent temper, made a strong speech in which he showed that the organizations would be fundamentally undemocratic. The consequence was that the movement was defeated by a large majority.

6. Various circumstances had combined to make a high school girl exceedingly sensitive. All kinds of explanations are possible as to why she had a tendency to imagine slights. She noticed that upon her appearance in a group, conversation very often ceased. Taking down the receiver of a party line, she heard her name mentioned and then heard the click of the receiver put up hastily. Going along the street on a dark evening, she observed in a lighted parlor several of her friends conversing and wondered that she was not invited. In vain her family tried to reassure and comfort her. One night she found a surprise party gathered at her home. The various groups had worked out this pleasure with the object of showing their appreciation of her helpfulness in planning the programs of the main club of the high school.

7. Mr. and Mrs. Jones were a young couple who had been married for several years. Mrs. Jones was considered the best housekeeper in the town. As a result of a car collision she had a fall and fractured her leg. After a few days, the nurse was called away. Mr. Jones told her that he had watched her and could do the work exactly as she had done it. The result was that he put every utensil to some incorrect use. He put dozens of household articles in peculiar and unusual places. On the day when Mrs. Jones could first walk around, she made many startling discoveries. These discoveries should be arranged in climactic order.

8. The title of the story is, "The Speech That Was Never Delivered." A young man was infatuated with a certain girl. He had never met her but had long anticipated doing so. He had planned a remarkable speech for an occasion when he should be introduced to her. What startling thing did she say that prevented his delivering his carefully planned speech? One method of handling this story might be that the young man was exceedingly fastidious about language. Although the girl was beautiful and had an appearance of refinement, her first sentences were so atrociously ungrammatical that the young man was shocked beyond recovery.

PROJECT IN OUTLINING A CHARACTER SKETCH

Let the Methods class plan the assignment of a character sketch based on *The Merchant of Venice* or *As You Like It* or *Julius Caesar* or *Macbeth*. Before assigning such a composition the teacher should aid the class in working out an outline with proof passages. An illustration of such an outline is here provided. The composition here planned calls for six paragraphs of which the topics are the introductory and concluding statements and the four major divisions of the body.

Outline for Ninth Grade Sketch of Bassanio

1[1]. A peculiar interest is attached to Bassanio as the character that links together the various stories of *The Merchant of Venice*.

2[1]. He is one of Shakespeare's finest gentlemen.

1[2]. His one fault of extravagance is the fault of a gentleman and is to be excused as the result of his position.

1^3. He is obliged to reduce his style of living because he has disabled his estate and is in debt.

I, 1, 122–130.

2^3. He gives "rare new liveries" to his servants.

II, 2, 111.

3^3. He has a feeling of contempt for silver, "the pale and common drudge between man and man."

III, 2, 103.

2^2. He has the versatility and the breadth of a gentleman.

1^3. He combines the qualities of "a scholar and a soldier."

I, 2, 112.

2^3. His breadth of view is seen in his appreciation of such original characters as Launcelot Gobbo and Gratiano.

II, 2, 156—"Give him a livery more guarded than his fellows."
II, 2, 179—"I have a suit to you."
"You have obtained it."

3^3. His breadth of view is seen in his understanding of humbug and hypocrisy in different walks of life.

III, 2, 73–100.

4^3. His breadth of view is seen in his humor.

III, 2, 34–40.
V, 1, 174.

3^2. He has the refinement of a gentleman.

1^3. His deference to Portia's personal decision after he has chosen the right casket is indicative of delicacy.

III, 2, 140–149.

2^3. His refinement shows itself equally in his long retention of the ring and in his final surrender of it.

IV, 1, 420–448.

3^3. His delicacy in refraining from taunting Shylock is seen by contrast with the coarseness of Gratiano.

IV, 1, 306–315.

4^2. He proves himself the real gentleman in fundamental truth and sincerity.

1^3. Before making choice of the caskets he has told Portia all the wealth he has is in his veins.

III, 2, 249–250.

2^3. His loyalty to Antonio is flawless as is Antonio's to himself.

3^1. It is only natural that Bassanio should attract the friendship of many, the affection of Antonio, and the love of Portia.

PROJECT IN BRIEF MAKING

Debating is an essential phase of composition work. Teachers must be prepared to give some instruction to high school students in making briefs or debating outlines. If

the members of the Methods class have not had a course in argumentation, they should have the experience of working out one or more debate briefs. All members of the class might agree on the selection of any one of the subjects listed, half of the class briefing the affirmative and half of the class briefing the negative. A model brief is here submitted for guidance. The general principles of briefing are that the introduction must be free from argument, that in the introduction issues should be stated in the form of questions which can be answered by "yes" or "no," that in the brief proper any statement must be a proof of the major statement under which it comes. The negative rather than the affirmative is here briefed because the difficulties of phrasing rebuttal arguments sometimes cause perplexity.

Debate Brief of a Negative Side

Resolved, That a student should advocate only that side of a question which has his conviction.

Introduction

1[1]. The question originated in the recent withdrawal from an intercollegiate debate of a student who declared himself hampered by conscientious scruples.

2[1]. Many writers at various times have expressed the affirmative view.

3[1]. The general practice of colleges and high schools is to assign sides according to the exigencies of debating and not according to convictions of individual students.

4[1]. The issues are the following:

1[2]. Is it possible without continuing the present practice to have considerable debating?

2^2. Is the present practice intellectually harmful ?
3^2. Is the present practice morally harmful ?

Brief Proper

1^1. Though the affirmative maintain that the present practice is morally harmful, this position is not tenable, for

1^2. Though the affirmative argue that speakers violate ethics in making statements which they do not believe, this argument has no force, for

1^3. Both judges and audience fully understand the conditions of the contest.

2^2. Though the opposition have tried to prove that speakers violate ethics in misleading the audience on important issues, this argument is unsound, for

1^3. Debaters can safely count that all aspects of the question will be revealed through the discussion.
2^3. Although one question in ten may involve moral principles, most debatable questions hinge on expediency.

3^2. A far more fundamental type of insincerity results if students are given sides in accordance with their professed convictions, for

1^3. In this case some students are obviously tempted to profess those convictions which are most likely to give them places on the debating squad.

2^1. Though our opponents would have you believe that the present practice is intellectually harmful, yet the contention is erroneous, because

1^2. Although the affirmative have attempted to show that the prevalent practice leads to failure in debate, this assertion is unfounded, for

1^3. Whenever a number of winning debaters are questioned, about half of them admit that at the time of beginning their research they had believed their side to be wrong.

2^2. Though the affirmative allege that there is no similar requirement in life, this contention is fallacious, for

1^3. The legal profession, teaching and preaching, demand the power to state with fairness, views that the speaker does not accept.

3^2. The prevalent practice develops mental flexibility, for

1^3. It forces a debater to magnify those aspects of a case which he is naturally inclined to minimize.

3^1. The present practice is necessary if we have considerable debating, for

1^2. Very often there is no way of reaching agreement except by the plan of having one party select the question and the other party choose the side and thus forcing some debaters to defend the side that they do not approve.

Conclusion

1^1. The proposition that a student should advocate only that side of a question which has his conviction has been disproved by showing that

1^2. Taking sides indiscriminately is not morally harmful.
2^2. Taking sides indiscriminately is not intellectually harmful.
3^2. Taking sides indiscriminately is necessary if there is to be considerable debating.

A FEW QUESTIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING

The Methods class may wish to use one of these debate questions for the briefing project that has been suggested. The questions are on the whole suitable to class debating in the senior high school. The objection sometimes offered that questions concerning complex government problems are too difficult for high school students is hardly valid. Such questions have very powerful attraction for able juniors and seniors and often have greater educational value than relatively simple questions of local policy.

1. Resolved, That discrimination against married women as teachers is contrary to the best interests of the public schools.
2. Resolved, That there should be a national Department of Education the head of which is a member of the President's Cabinet.
3. Resolved, That a system of old age pensions should be established in the United States.
4. Resolved, That military training in all schools except those which profess a distinctly military purpose should be abolished.
5. Resolved, That every state legislature should be unicameral.
6. Resolved, That on the whole inter-school athletics is detrimental to education in the United States.
7. Resolved, That every state should abolish capital punishment.
8. Resolved, That the General Assembly of this State should enact a statute providing for a system of unemployment insurance for industrial workers.
9. Resolved, That all hydro-electric power sites should be owned and operated by the federal government.

10. Resolved, That down to this date the federal administration has been such as to justify the continuance in power of the dominant political party.
11. Resolved, That the United States should adopt a uniform marriage and divorce law.
12. Resolved, That a constitutional amendment should be adopted forbidding any declaration of war or any placing of troops on foreign soil except as authorized by a popular referendum.

SUBJECTS FOR SPEECHES

We have already noted that the writing of speeches affords a natural method of securing auditors or a public for the literary efforts of pupils. The following list of subjects for speeches will be useful to some teachers in the field. No more valuable work could be done by the Methods class than the outlining of some of the subjects here provided for high school speeches. The first twenty subjects are simple and suitable for very short speeches. The remaining twenty should be attempted only if pupils can spare considerable time for gathering material before writing.

1. Heroes of the Fire Department
2. The Boy Scout Organization
3. The Camp Fire Girls
4. The Play Ground Movement
5. The Juvenile Court
6. Conservation of Trees and Forests
7. The Public Library of Our City
8. The Public School System of Our Town
9. A Plea for Better Motion Pictures
10. The Resources and the Future of Our State
11. Education in Thrift

12. The Privilege of the Ballot
13. The Value of High School Athletics
14. The Right Kind of School Spirit
15. Team Work
16. The New Industrial Opportunities for Women
17. Plea for the Abolition of Bill Boards
18. The Value of Public Speaking
19. The Value of the Good Roads Movement
20. The Social Benefits of the Radio
21. The Slaughter by Automobiles
22. The Value of the Eighteenth Amendment
23. A Plea for the Economic Status of the American Farmer
24. A Plea for the Abandonment of American Imperialism
25. The Need for Consolidated Rural Schools
26. Legislative Protection of the Woman Worker
27. Plea for the Child Labor Amendment
28. Opportunities of the Woman Citizen
29. The Opportunity for America as a Leader of Peace
30. The Horrors of the Next War
31. Our Unemployment Problem
32. Lawlessness in America
33. A Plea for the American Coal Miner
34. Justice for the Negro in America
35. Prison Reform
36. The Menace of Political Corruption
37. Gandhi
38. Eugene V. Debs
39. Mob Violence in the United States
40. A Plea for Toleration and Freedom of Speech

RHETORIC REVIEW

Teachers agree that rhetorical theory is in danger of neglect and that composition practice combined with theory is

far more beneficial than practice alone. A somewhat comprehensive rhetoric review is here provided for use in connection with the assignment of a long paper. The review is in the form of questions which teachers may put to the high school students and may have discussed several days before the long paper is to be finished.

In what three elements of a composition must we strive to secure unity ?

In which one of these three elements is there greatest danger that we may violate unity: the composition as a whole; the paragraph; the sentence ?

By which sentence of the paragraph should we in doubtful cases test all other sentences in order to secure paragraph unity ?

In writing a long composition what are the two ways of securing coherence or smooth movement ?

Why is good logical arrangement a more vital matter than transition expressions ?

Since the purpose of an outline is to aid in arrangement, to which one of the three basic principles of good writing does an outline contribute ?

When in passing from one paragraph to another we do not wish to have an entire sentence of transition, what are a few of the possible transition words or phrases ?

Is a sentence of transition from one paragraph to another correctly placed at the end of the first paragraph or at the beginning of the second ?

In writing a long composition what are the two chief ways of securing strong emphasis for important ideas ?

What other name is sometimes used to express the idea of the word "proportion" ?

What should be the character of the last sentence in each paragraph and of the last paragraph of your whole composition ?

Apart from the introductory and the concluding paragraphs what number of words should an inexperienced writer keep in mind as a good average length for an expository paragraph ?

What are the eight rhetorical modes of paragraph development ?

Of the eight modes, proof, example, restatement, definition, concession, particulars, contrast, comparison, which three modes can be introduced most frequently ?

Which mode demands most originality from the writer ?

Which mode always follows a concession ?

Which mode is especially common for the closing sentence of a paragraph ?

What is the advantage of the short sentence ?

What is the advantage of the long, well unified sentence?

What unpleasant effect would be caused by using a large number of very short sentences in succession ?

What are the two types of sentences if we classify with reference to the point in the sentence where a full thought is completed ?

Why does the periodic sentence usually give stronger emphasis than the loose sentence ?

What is the rule for using the parallelism or balance ?

What advantage do we gain from using some interrogative and some exclamatory sentences as well as declarative sentences ?

What are some of the faults that you are likely to discover and to correct if you read your essay aloud before you make your final copy ?

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Secure from a training school supervisor a set of high school compositions not yet corrected. Let the members of the Methods class arrange to work in pairs or in groups of three. For instance, suppose that A, B, and C, students in the Methods class, are given four or five compositions for correction. Without marking the papers let A, B, and C make independent lists of errors. Then let the three compare their lists and decide which errors are serious enough to mark. They may then make the really important criticisms on the compositions. Beginners have a tendency to make many useless criticisms.
2. Let two or three members of the Methods class review the theory of narration in a rhetoric text and plan application to this story based on *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*: Brom Bones, happily married to Katrina, gives his own account of how he outwitted Ichabod.
3. Let two or three members of the Methods class who are likely to teach English in the eighth grade work out details for this project and discuss their plans before the entire Methods class: The eighth grade class, having read Hale's *The Man Without a Country,* wish to write an original incident about Philip

Nolan. The plot proposed is that Philip Nolan once prevented a dreadful mutiny on shipboard by telling the common sailors his own story with its tragic consequences. With some care a strong climax is possible.

4. Give suggestions for tactful dealing in relation to a student who brings his English teacher sentimental effusions in faulty metre and who regards these effusions as great achievements in free verse.
5. Select any one of the subjects for oral expository paragraphs given on pages 222–224 and plan the development of a paragraph on this topic in team work with an eleventh grade class. What modes of development can be used easily and naturally ?
6. Let each member of the Methods class give an experience derived from the life of his family or of his friends or of himself and tell how he would use it as story material in high school composition. Let the Methods class vote as to which member gives the best material for a high school story.
7. In this chapter suggestions have been given for teaching seniors to write the familiar essay. Let each member of the Methods class select one subject from the list following and report subdivisions and humorous hints that a teacher might offer to aid a class in writing on the subject.

1. Fashions
2. Receptions
3. Worrying
4. Bores
5. Moving
6. Women's Clubs
7. Superstitions
8. Prejudices
9. Advertising
10. My Fellow Students
11. Manners in Traveling
12. Preachers and Sermons
13. Political Candidates
14. Delusions of Parents
15. Human Nature in Church Relations
16. My Former Ambitions
17. Styles in Interior Decorating
18. Advantages of My Native State
19. Dogs
20. School Dormitories

8. A certain teacher received a set of themes a week ago. She could not correct them sooner but she has been seriously negli-

gent in not having checked through to account for every theme. She now finds John Jones' theme missing. Advise the best course under the circumstances.

9. If you are helping an eighth grade class compose a story to be entitled "Priscilla and Her Grandchildren" and to be based on *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* what suggestions can you give as to the way in which Priscilla would tell the romance of her youth to the on-coming generation ?

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMPOSITION

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATING ORAL COMPOSITION

Oral composition is a kind of work which is greatly enjoyed both by pupils and by teachers. The educational value which it may have is dependent on the degree of effort which the pupil makes. We shall, therefore, consider various ways of securing intense motivation.

83. The value of oral composition. — In the view of many progressive English teachers, oral composition is the most fortunate discovery of recent years. Both in the junior and in the senior high school it often accomplishes results that are as gratifying as they are astonishing. If wisely directed, it keeps in exact equilibrium and in harmonious union our two great aims, correct English and expressive English. When a student is to stand and talk before a large group of his fellows and two or three adults, he wants something interesting to say. He wants to hold his audience. He searches his experience for an entertaining incident. He scrutinizes his various convictions to see which one he can present with warmth and enthusiasm. He practices in his own room, even though he may be modest enough to say that his sole object is to "keep from making a fool of himself." He tries to be clear, to make his words effective and

true to his thought because he wishes to please a room full of people. He watches his syntax because mistakes will be noticed by the many listeners. He is not so fearful as to be paralyzed but is concerned enough to take pains.

84. **Preparation by the pupil.** — We should recognize in the very beginning that everything hinges on the use of our splendid opportunities for high motivation. Unfortunately we bandy about the word "motivation" until its very triteness hides from us the immensity of its meaning in certain phases of English teaching. In Daudet's great story, *The Last Lesson,* which is undoubtedly based on actual historic fact, the teacher taught with a clarity and effectiveness that had never before distinguished his work and the pupils absorbed knowledge with ease and rapidity hitherto unknown — and all because of high-powered motivation. In oral composition motivation may have equal significance. Oral composition is only an aimless method of killing time and is worse than the most mechanical textbook teaching if we cannot utilize the effect of audience, of subject discussed, and of the occasion itself to induce the most intense effort. Oral composition is utterly worthless if the pupil is half-hearted, if he does not put the maximum energy into thinking out the organization of his ideas, the form of sentences, and the choice of words. It is farcical if he has no feeling of serious responsibility. Perhaps some one may answer that effort is everywhere important. Is it not true, however, that much less effort need be expended in acquiring knowledge than in acquiring power? In oral composition, indeed, motivation is the indispensable dynamo.

How then can we intensify the application and zeal of

our students? We must be sure that they are familiar with the various values of the training. They will welcome the training if they see how it will aid them in the conversational demands of daily life.[1] They have probably already envied acquaintances who can state a case very successfully. They have observed the favorable impression which certain classmates make on teachers not always because of extensive information but often because of agreeable ease in speaking. They have perhaps experienced a feeling of inferiority and humiliation in connection with various social exigencies. They can easily be shown that their general power is increased whenever they speak with complete freedom and self-mastery. They can be led to view oral composition as a cure for shyness and awkwardness. They will be willing to concentrate energy and to practice if they recognize that the public speaker addressing fifty people multiplies his own personality fifty times. They will not object to the hard work if they know that public speaking is an avenue to leadership and that it gives the good citizen his chief opportunity to prescribe specific remedies for the many diseases of the body politic. They will gladly pay the price in effort if they may attain the power by which the labor leader wins his influence, the politician his office, and the lawyer his case. Every hard working instructor has observed the eagerness with which promising students plunge into the work when they perceive the values. A teacher has reported an incident from her class room. A bright student surprised

[1] An extensive investigation has been made with the purpose of discovering in what particulars most people feel their English to be inadequate. See "Report of Committee on Place and Function of English in American Life," *English Journal*, XV, 110–131. This report shows that most people feel their English inadequate for the needs of conversation and interviews.

her one day by asking if he might put a very personal question to the entire class. Somewhat perplexed, she assented. He then informed the class that as he desired to learn to speak in public and had always lisped, he had recently undergone two operations on his tongue in order to cure the lisp: he wanted the opinion of the class as to the degree of his improvement. Does not an incident of this sort prove the passionate interest and effort that may be aroused through oral composition ?

The effort which is needed is effort in preparation rather than effort in delivery. We must allow ample time for preparation. We must not be misled by the vague theory that we should train students in extemporaneous speaking. In the strict sense of the word, there is no such thing as extemporaneous speaking. It is true that we use the term to describe the happy result when an experienced, skillful speaker gives in response to the unforeseen demands of an occasion ideas previously formulated in his own mind. In school work we use the term with reference to the rapidly prepared speech of an advanced student who by laborious preparation on many previous speeches has acquired the power to organize the material with extreme rapidity, who has made exhaustive study of some general topic, and who limits his discussion to a subdivision of the general topic. Extemporaneous speaking accordingly has little place in high school work. Contests in extemporaneous speaking are suitable only in the later years of college and should be limited to students who have had extensive practice in other kinds of speaking and whose talent is exceptional. Encouragement of extemporaneous speaking in the high school is

encouragement of loose preparation and means the infliction of much pain and suffering on a more or less impatient audience. The training is of questionable value even to a glib and fluent high school student; it is likely to contribute to his self-complacency and to conceal from him the fact that he says nothing worth while but merely flounders around. Finished and brilliant speakers who are best qualified for extemporaneous speaking are least willing to attempt it. A short time ago a famous orator was interviewed by a committee and invited to deliver an address on Washington's birthday, one month later. He replied, "Only one month to prepare ! I can't think of it." When the committee showed keen disappointment, he added, "If you wish an address on Washington's birthday thirteen months from this time, I can make one." The committee accepted his offer and thirteen months later he gave an address that will not be forgotten by those who heard it.

Always in oral composition we should be certain that everybody has his subject about a week before the day when the composition is to be delivered. Though it is not easy to find good subjects, it is just as easy to assign them a week ahead as a day ahead. When a teacher announces, "The assignment for tomorrow is a three-minute talk on any subject that you may choose," he is responsible for the unhappy consequences. In such a case it is not strange that few should be well prepared and that many should be unprepared. It is not strange that the few who are prepared cover a range that includes everything from newspaper jokes to discussions of the outlook for basketball. If we give out a list of subjects to the class and permit some selection, we

should require that the choices be reported at least five days before the composition day. If students are to find their own subjects, they should report the subjects in writing at least five days ahead. Subjects with signatures may be listed on a blackboard or bulletin board. We should announce ourselves as willing to aid any one who lacks material provided the student applies more than one day before the composition period. The night before is not the proper time to be hunting material but rather is the time for final polish. If a teacher is cordial in giving aid to those who apply, he prevents the failure of the most helpless and deprives the really resourceful of any excuse for negligence.

Not only should preparation be made early, but it should be carried on intelligently. On this point the teacher may give clear and helpful directions. He should not absolutely forbid the writing out and memorizing of the speech, but should suggest that success is frequently gained through thinking out a short speech and talking it off a number of times. He may explain that the effect of having mechanically memorized a speech is extremely unpleasant to the auditors and that pupils who have memorized sometimes give distressing emphasis to such words as *a* and *the*. He may advise that if memorizing must be done, it should be more by ideas than by words. He should permit freedom in method of working but should show that the goal is a clear, natural conversational style. He must warn against frequent use of the words *and, why, well, so,* and against the weak rising inflection at the close of sentences. He should encourage the use of short ringing sentences and in argumentative material of some interrogations both as a

relief from the monotony of declarative sentences and as a means of appealing to the audience. He should illustrate good and bad posture and should emphasize the value of easy bearing, directness, sympathetic voice, poise, and self-possession. He should insist on a little practice every day as worth far more than much practice on any one day.

In some cases students will put forth greater effort on oral composition if an outline is required two days before the exercise. Such an outline should be very brief. If the composition is to be narration, only two sentences, one stating the character of the problem and one stating the solution, are needed. If the composition is exposition, particulars, examples, comparisons, and proofs to be used should be cited. If the composition is argument, minor proofs should be given in order. Such a requirement not only prevents procrastination but helps many students avoid looseness and rambling. A further advantage is that the teacher can discover which students are in need of help and suggestions.

XX. INCIDENTAL PROBLEMS

Countless teachers of oral composition have observed that certain practical questions inevitably arise and demand an answer. One such question is, "Shall the student who wishes notes for speaking be allowed to have them?" Another question is, "Shall the occasional student who seeks to evade the oral composition requirement be expected to meet it in order to secure credit in the English course?" A third question is, "What is the preferred time limit for each oral composition?"

85. **Speaking without notes.** — Aside from the ever-present and supremely important problem of motivation there are some minor problems peculiar to oral composition. Shall the student who wishes the aid of notes be permitted to

use them ? The fact that many professional speakers keep outline and notes before them might be offered in support of the affirmative and at all events should preclude a too arbitrary opinion. More cogent arguments, however, may be offered for the negative. The student, unlike the pro-

An Oral Composition Class

Student officers are in charge of this tenth grade oral composition class.

fessional speaker, is allowed an extremely brief time and is not obliged to keep in mind an immense range of complex material. He can easily retain the few ideas that he needs. Even if he should plead timidity and should beg to take his notes along "for company," his plea should not be approved. He should instead be advised to speak more briefly and should be encouraged after he has had more experience to lengthen his speeches. If notes are used, the

value of oral composition is reduced and the chief purposes are defeated. A speaker is not gaining self-possession when he becomes afraid of his audience and looks down at his paper. He is not conquering but is concealing his embarrassment. Moreover, the habit of dependence becomes fixed. A person who swims with water wings is very slow in learning to swim without them. So a speaker who has become accustomed to using notes seldom becomes independent of them. Besides, it is apparent that the pupil who uses notes, whether those notes be full statements or the merest jottings, is by no means attaining the main end of oral composition, ready, correct speech. He makes less thorough preparation, exerts less effort, and loses the advantage of being forced instantaneously to find words. Nor is the pupil who talks from notes the only one who suffers. The class that must listen can feel little pleasure and little interest. Many a teacher who has been disappointed in the value to the listeners of oral composition could effect a vast improvement by prohibiting the use of notes.

86. **The timid student.** — A problem that unduly concerns and embarrasses a few teachers emerges in connection with the occasional student who professes inability or extreme timidity. Although most students delight in oral composition,[2] about one student in fifty tries by every conceivable shift to escape participation. The problem is less serious than it may appear. Real stubbornness or recalcitrancy as to oral compositions can come only from mismanagement on our part. A high school teacher of oral

[2] Incidental proof that students like oral composition is given by Marion Jewett Austin, "Oral English and Rhetoric O," *English Journal*, XI, 14–18.

composition, who failed to see the implication in her words, actually boasted, "I always find out who the stubborn people are." A tactful teacher does not arouse latent stubbornness. In the first place, he finds out whether the plea is timidity. If such a plea is genuine, the teacher by encouragement can usually induce an attempt. He should offer some personal assistance in outside practice the day before the class exercise. In most cases the student, even if reluctant, will respond to kindly persuasion and will do his best. But if persuasion fails, it is not necessary to engage in an unseemly contest with the pupil. It is far better to assign and accept as a substitute a written composition of three or four paragraphs. It is needless to say that still greater leniency should be shown in the case of a student whose stage fright is so extreme as to be pathological or of one who has a physical disability, such as a tendency to stammer or a defective heart. Ordinarily the substitution of written work for oral will not long be necessary. The student who is not committed to an unyielding attitude will prefer to attempt the oral work.

87. **The time limit.** — In considering the preferred time allowance for an oral composition we should remember that it may vary in accordance with the class of subjects used on a given occasion. Every teacher, however, is likely to decide upon a customary time limit, variation from which will be rare. There is much to be said in favor of an extremely brief time. There are some distinct advantages in two minutes.[3] In two minutes two hundred words can be spoken

[3] This question was answered in writing by eighty-three Kansas City teachers of high school English:

In the average exercise in oral composition which time limit for each student

with extreme deliberation and with careful emphasis. Thus a very well rounded paragraph can be given in two minutes. If some care is used in selection of essential facts, almost any personal incident can be told in two minutes. In fact, while one minute cannot perhaps be recommended as a time limit, it has been adopted by a few teachers with apparently satisfactory results. The splendid effect of a reasonably short time allowance is that the student is able to plan every detail of his speech. He can afford to practice until his delivery is smooth and expressive. The short time allowance for each individual facilitates conserving of class periods.

XXI. SUBJECTS

Subjects for oral composition should as far as possible be adapted to individual preferences. They should be reasonably specific because each speech is extremely brief. They may be derived from personal observation and from the fields of art, literature, education, science, sociology, and politics. The large variety of topics necessitates and insures broad range of language by the student.

88. **Selection of subjects.** — In oral as in written composition the most weighty responsibility resting on the teacher is that of finding proper subjects. Attractive subjects stimulate effort and make the task easy and even absorbing. When suggestive subjects are discovered, perplexity gives way to inspiration. The right subject for any individual pupil involves the complex question of class aims and of personal interest. All subjects used on a given occasion should be of similar nature. Otherwise the class exercise will not

do you consider yields the best results: one minute; two minutes; three minutes; five minutes?

Four teachers checked one minute; twenty-five teachers, two minutes; forty-seven teachers, three minutes; seven teachers, five minutes.

show unity in variety. Otherwise we cannot concentrate on any definite rhetorical aims. At the same time, there should be some choice possible for every student. Some teachers satisfy both requisites by an excellent plan of distributing subjects. The list is passed to the students, who sign their names beside the subject desired. There should usually be the provision that only two names may be signed beside any one subject. The two students who have an identical topic may, if they so desire, further subdivide this topic and in this way avoid any overlapping. On the other hand, if they find it inconvenient to confer, the double treatment of the same topic is not only safe from the danger of monotony but also has a distinct interest due to the opportunity for comparison. Even if two students use the same topic, the number of topics needed for oral composition is very large. Consolation for the teacher is found in the fact that a first-rate list may be used with many successive classes.

89. Magazine reports. — Fortunately, a special list of subjects is not always needed. Occasionally the report of recent events may serve as the composition assignment. There should be the accompanying direction that any event selected must have social or political significance. One day later than the assignment small individual slips are distributed on which the student writes the particular subject that he desires to use. If the teacher, looking the slips over, finds unsuitable choices or too much tendency to repetition, he may himself make substitutions. Though this type of exercise is mainly reproduction, it rapidly increases command of language. When for the purpose of language growth students are allowed to use the organization or the phrasing

of periodicals, they should understand clearly that the permission is limited to the stipulated specific occasion. As a variation of the assignment, there may be the requirement that each speaker introduce into his talk at least one word not technical which he has never before used in speaking and that at the conclusion of his talk he write this word on the board.

An exercise that may be based on periodicals or may be altogether original is the assignment that a subject of current interest be presented in connection with a diagram or graph or graphic illustration. Some members of the class should prepare large stiff charts for their illustrative material; others may use blackboard space facing the auditors. If the student uses either the graph or the statistics which he has found in a periodical, he gives credit to the source. With a little encouragement the more creative students will work out original graphs or shaded maps to show significant contrasts. For instance, simple but interesting maps might be designed to display the advantageous location of city schools or parks. Pupils who participate in work of this kind henceforth appreciate the effectiveness of graphic aids and understand how to make the double preparation involved in handling such aids. They really learn in this way to introduce graphic material also into their written composition.

90. Incidents. — The narration of incidents derived from experience or observation may be highly entertaining if in the assignment attention is given to various precautions. There should be careful discussion of the sort of incidents desired. Some incidents are too commonplace and familiar

to be interesting. Some might have an egotistical effect. On the other hand, approval may usually be given to incidents that have a humorous culmination or to those in which the laugh is on the narrator. Very simple anecdotes that show human nature have a definite value and pointedness. The teacher might illustrate in this way:

> A few days ago, I was talking to three or four people about their cars. In the group was a woman who has been involved in various lawsuits and who has had bitter quarrels with several relatives. Hot water, indeed, seems to be her natural element. As we talked about different makes of cars, she repeatedly dissented from us and explained where we were wrong. Trying to be polite, I commented on her extensive information. She replied, "Yes, I do understand cars. When my son bought a car a month ago, he made a bad mistake not to follow my advice. Just this morning he was saying he wished that he had bought the kind I advised. He admitted that I had been right and that he had been wrong. I answered, 'Yes, my son, I am always right.'" Don't you think that her answer to her son throws some light on her storm-tossed career?

In searching for material students should be advised to recall experiences which created laughter at their own dinner tables. They should be told to heighten details in order to increase interest and suspense.

91. **Some descriptive subjects.** — Descriptive subjects are sometimes rich in content and information. In the junior high school the description of famous pictures, although not a good subject for written composition, is admirable for oral composition. Even in small towns it is not difficult to obtain copies of the *Sistine Ma-*

donna, the *Last Supper,* the *Last Judgment,* the *Aurora,* the *Angelus,* and other well known masterpieces. The pupils should be encouraged to search all available sources for information in regard to the paintings or the artists. They should show copies of the pictures at the time when they give the talks. Similarly, for elementary students famous statues or historic buildings afford excellent subjects. For students somewhat more advanced an interesting subject is, "A Good Cartoon." Each student selects his own cartoon, which, of course, must deal with a live question. He tells what the picture is, what political idea it presents, whether the purpose of the cartoon is fair and just, and what are the elements of humor or satire. Advanced students also enjoy a magazine day. Each student presents the distinctive merits of a monthly or a weekly periodical and supports his case by reference to some of the good things in recent numbers.

92. **Subjects from science.** — Since science dominates all modern thinking, it affords a vast range of attractive subjects. These subjects are connected with biology, physics, and chemistry and with the practical applications of these sciences. Oral compositions based on science tend to enrich the vocabulary in the directions most needed. A composition assignment based on health might include such topics as "The Meaning of Balanced Diet," "Vitamins," "Some Uses of X-Rays," "The Equipment of a Modern Hospital," "The Meaning of Blood Pressure," "Successful Anti-Toxins," "Under-Weight and Over-Weight," "The Modern Practice of Quarantine," "The Treatment of Tuberculosis," "Reduction of Infant Mortality," "Recent Theories of Dentistry,"

"The Training of a Nurse," and "The Effect of Prohibition on National Health." Further illustration of practical scientific topics is included under the general title "The Value of a Recent Invention" or "Recent Improvements of an Important Invention." Each student will naturally have the benefit of considering a large number of inventions before he reports his choice.

93. **Subjects from education.** — Likewise, many phases of education serve admirably for short talks. Among these are "The Rank of Our State in Education," "Contrast of Rural and Urban Education in Our State," "Progress in Consolidation," "Vocational Education," "Tests of Intelligence and Achievement," "The Multiplication of High Schools," "Inspection by the State Department," "The Mode of Electing our Board of Education," "Physical Education in the Public Schools," "The Need of a Federal Department of Education," "Attempts to Use the Public Schools for Propaganda," "Kindergartens in Our State." Even if the compositions dealing with these themes are inevitably superficial, students profit by the broad content.

94. **Subjects from literature.** — An oral composition assignment based on a literary masterpiece which a class have just studied is a useful way of emphasizing tendencies of the book or the writer. Appreciation of a Shakespeare play is invariably enhanced by oral compositions about the different characters.[4] But the special province of oral composition is contemporary literature. Students are very eager to have information about living authors. A list of twenty English

[4] Some oral composition subjects based on *The Merchant of Venice* are given on pages 225–226.

and American authors might include the names of G. K. Chesterton, Bernard Shaw, J. M. Barrie, John Galsworthy, H. G. Wells, James Joyce, Bertrand Russell, Rudyard Kipling, John Masefield, William Butler Yeats, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Stephen Benét, Edgar Lee Masters, Robert Frost, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, Edith Wharton, James Branch Cabell, H. L. Mencken. Bound volumes of periodicals yield many interesting facts about these people. About some of them biographical booklets may be obtained without cost from publishing houses.[5] Another assignment based on current literature is that each student report some bit of information connected with recent significant plays or books. Ambitious students will do almost any amount of browsing in order to get the best possible material.

95. **Subjects from sociology and politics.** — Subjects from sociology and politics have the great advantage of lending themselves to argumentative speaking. They will, therefore, usually be treated in orations and formal debates. Occasionally it may be possible to make a list of propositions so definite and so restricted in their scope that they can be defended or attacked effectively in brief speeches. As a rule such proportions are necessarily of ephemeral interest. During a gubernatorial or a presidential campaign a possible subject is, "A particular reason why I believe in voting for ....." In order that the class discussion may be quite impartial, the teacher must be sure that there are some advocates to defend each nominee.

[5] See H. D. Roberts, "A Brochure Approach to Modern Biography," *English Journal*, XVII, 332–336.

96. **Objectionable assignments.** — It is evident that oral composition offers a fruitful field for experiment. Certain types of exercises, however, ought always to be avoided. We should not permit the plots of novels or stories to be narrated. To the speaker, the only value is practice in condensing. To the auditor positive injury is done because appetite for the book is dulled. It is a sad mistake thus to gratify curiosity about the plot, the appetizer that stimulates each young person to read for himself. Occasionally, indeed, even immature enthusiasts may make comments of a sort that will allure others to the reading. But they are far more likely to give a mechanical narrative that will not arouse the interest of others in the book. The reproduction of newspaper anecdotes and jokes is likewise to be excluded from oral practice. Such reproduction has neither the content nor the vocabulary value connected with reports of news paragraphs and of magazine articles.

XXII. SPECIAL ORAL COMPOSITION PROJECTS

Aside from the assignment in frequent and regular use, oral composition may serve some special ends. It is an ideal method of preparing inexperienced students for the writing of an expository paper. Advanced students in the senior high school will get much value from occasional rhetorical analysis given orally. Reports on biography by seniors both afford extensive information and direct attention to an attractive field of reading. All high school students should participate in debating and in oratorical contests.

97. **A preparation for writing.** — In the writing of exposition, which is always difficult for beginners, preliminary speeches are an incomparable aid. Let us suppose that ninth

grade students have just worked out an outline preparatory to writing a six-paragraph essay on "Fire Prevention." The teacher divides the class, numbering perhaps thirty-five, into six groups, each group including five or six students. To each of the different groups he assigns one of these subjects: (1) Any one who has surveyed the ruins of a once beautiful home has felt the tragedy in the havoc wrought by fire; (2) The money losses from fire are very heavy; (3) Throughout the country many lives are annually lost by fire; (4) Imprudent and wasteful methods of building are the cause of many destructive fires; (5) Individual carelessness or ignorance is responsible for the largest number of disastrous fires; (6) We can do many things to prevent fires and to avert the most serious consequences of fires. The five or six students who have the same subject each prepare an oral paragraph of about one hundred fifty words. The other members of the class are not permitted to take notes during the delivery of the oral composition but are allowed to use in their writing any facts, illustrations, proofs or incidents which they are able to retain. Those who have the same subject speak in immediate succession and when the members of any group have finished speaking, the class vote by ballot to determine who made the best speech on the particular paragraph topic. Since all of the class are eager to get ideas that will reduce the difficulty of writing and since they are not permitted to take notes, there is no lack of the keenest attention and interest. After hearing the same idea developed in a variety of ways, the students all have the pleasurable realization that they can find ample material for their written compositions.

98. Rhetorical analysis. — In the last two years of the senior high school rhetorical analysis may occasionally be combined with oral exposition. Before assigning the work we must develop inductively the rhetorical types of sentences used in exposition: topic sentence, definition, particulars, proof, example, contrast, comparison, concession, restatement. When we require analysis, we must assign comparatively easy subjects and must advise rather short paragraphs. We must warn against an attempt to use sentence types not natural to the particular theme. We should expect every one to give his analysis just after he has finished his paragraph while he still stands facing the class. To illustrate, the following paragraph and analysis by a high school junior have been selected because most modes of development are included:

The weather is a wonderful convenience for conversation. It is a subject on which nobody need be in fear of disclosing ignorance. It is not like the Einstein theory, which the average person would be afraid to discuss. Besides, it has universal interest, for it affects our destinies and determines yearly crops as well as the results of football games. Perhaps the weather may not be an ideal subject for sustained conversation. But it is undeniably an admirable starter. Sometimes when it is as hard to begin to talk as to crank by hand an old Ford car, a remark about threatening showers may be as useful as the best automatic cranking apparatus. At an afternoon tea a woman thrown with strangers may always resort to the unfailing refuge of the weather. Thus some other woman in the group is enabled to discourse about the weather that she experienced during a recent trip and perhaps to talk fluently for fifteen minutes without saying anything. Should not everybody be thankful for the resource of the weather?

My first sentence is my topic sentence. My second sentence, "It is a subject on which nobody need be in fear of disclosing ignorance," is a proof of the topic. My third sentence about the knowledge needed to discuss the Einstein theory is a contrast sentence. My fourth sentence about the way the weather affects our destinies is another proof of the topic. My fifth sentence, "Perhaps the weather may not be an ideal subject for sustained conversation," is a concession sentence. My sixth sentence, "But it is undeniably an admirable starter," is a restatement. My next sentence about conversation as an automatic cranking device is a comparison. My two sentences about a conversation at a tea constitute an example. My closing sentence is a restatement.

Such oral analysis is helpful in showing the student the relation between topic and minor ideas. Probably, indeed, frequent analysis would tend to make organization stiff and studied and by hampering free thought would cause a crabbed style. Occasional practice of this type has only beneficial results. It gives the teacher an ideal opportunity to clarify for the entire class the difficult subject of paragraph construction and to correct any misconceptions. It causes the pupil to attain closer unity, smoother sequence and more forceful emphasis than he has ever secured before. It makes his subsequent work in exposition more logical. For many students it serves as a sign-post pointing the way to greater variety of thought and expression.[6]

99. Biographical reports. — Another special type of oral composition which may properly be allowed three or even four minutes is the report based on biography. It is suited only to the last two years or perhaps only to the last

[6] Subjects for oral exposition are listed on pages 222–224.

year of the senior high school. In connection with the general survey of literary history usually made in the twelfth grade the teacher assigns a particular biography to a group of two or three students. The brief, charming biographies of the *English Men of Letters* series are admirably adapted to this purpose. The biographies should be those of authors whose peculiarities were pronounced or whose careers were dramatic. Suitable authors are Milton, Pope, Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Scott, Charles Lamb, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Charlotte Brontë, Browning, and William Morris. Such writers are more interesting to high school pupils than quiet and reticent characters, such as Addison, Wordsworth, Jane Austen, and Tennyson. A week before the composition day the student should report what phase of the author's life is to be the theme of his talk. A chronological account is the one thing that must be taboo. Excellent available topics are physical appearance and habits, temperament and disposition, favorite opinions and hobbies, love affairs and domestic relations, places of residence, methods of literary work, financial status or difficulties, friendships and social relations.

100. **Debating.** — Debating is a training that affords innumerable benefits. These cannot easily be overstated or exaggerated. If the teacher knows how to direct the work and is an enthusiastic believer in it, every thing else follows as a matter of course. Participation almost insures clear definite thinking, apt use of varied language, and convincing presentation. In spite of all that has ever been said against formal debating, the very fact that opposed views

receive equal consideration contributes to broadminded and judicial attitudes. In a high school class debate, the chance for rebuttal provides for a tiny bit of extemporaneous speaking under the most stimulating conditions. Students are on their mettle because the element of skirmish demands nimbleness and speed. Every high school student ought to have the valuable experience of debating at least once each year. If a class numbers forty, only seven class periods are needed. For any debate the teacher must select a fresh, live, evenly balanced proposition, in most cases of a social or a political nature. In public schools religious questions are to be avoided. But it is often possible to use other questions on which feeling runs high. The fact is, the ethical rules of debate promote good sportsmanship and check unfair arguments just as the regulations for an athletic contest prevent certain kinds of physical conflict. The general plan for each debate is to arrange two teams, each team made up of three speakers. At least two weeks before the debate the three speakers of a team divide the chief arguments and give some thought to refutation. Each speaker makes an especial effort to find proof for the issue or issues assigned to him and he supplies this material to the other members of his team. A week before the debate each speaker prepares a detailed brief of his side of the question. Thus the teacher has opportunity to make suggestions to either team. Of course, he must never betray the argument of one side to the other side. In accordance with the average length of class periods either of the following time schemes may be used:

Plan A

Order of speakers	Number of minutes
First affirmative	4
First negative	5
Second affirmative	5
Second negative	5
Third affirmative	5
Third negative	6
First affirmative rebuttal	2

Plan B

Order of speakers	Number of minutes
First affirmative	4
First negative	4
Second affirmative	4
Second negative	4
Third affirmative	4
Third negative	4
First negative rebuttal	2
First affirmative rebuttal	2
Second negative rebuttal	2
Second affirmative rebuttal	2
Third negative rebuttal	2
Third affirmative rebuttal	2

According to Plan A all speakers except the first give rebuttal in the same speeches with their constructive arguments. Plan A places a heavier responsibility on the leaders, the first affirmative and the third negative.

101. **Oratorical contests.** — Effective delivery by students of their original memorized speeches is not less essential than is debating. Let us suppose that each member of the junior class has written a speech at the beginning of the year. Since it is probably impracticable to have all the speeches delivered, each student should be asked to select parts of his speech amounting to four or five hundred words and to memorize these parts. Two or three weeks should be allowed for memorizing and for practice. All the speeches can be delivered on three consecutive days. Lead- to argue that, because formal or public speaking is a rare the speakers. There are always intelligent public-spirited citizens who are willing to give this sort of service. The five or six who have highest rank may then memorize their full orations and compete in a public contest. Another plan

is for the three or four who have highest rank to engage in a contest with an equal number of speakers from the senior class. This work is of tremendous importance not only because it prepares for all kinds of public speaking but also because it results in adequacy for countless social situations.[7]

XXIII. OCCASIONAL ORAL PROJECTS

Although the class room procedure should be mainly restricted to methods that have been thoroughly tested, it should find a place for some experimenting on a limited scale. Discussion of the essential features of a good conversation and illustration through a group can be advantageously introduced at least once during the school year. Individual assignments designed to provide for various speaking exigencies may be given to students of special aptitude and talent.

102. **Instruction in conversation.** — Just as soon as an English teacher is reasonably sure that he understands his job, he should strike out fearlessly and engage in some experiments. In doing this he should not permanently abandon the traditional procedures of English teaching. It is a mistake to infer, as do some innovators, that the time proportions of school activities should be identical with the time proportions of activities in later life. It is hardly correct to argue that, because formal or public speaking is a rare practice with many adults, it should therefore receive little attention in school. It is probably far more effective in leading to articulateness than conversation classes can ever be. Nevertheless, the teacher who is ready to try new plans preserves the life of his class room, keeps himself from get-

[7] On the worth of public speaking in education see an interesting discussion by James A. Winans, "Aims and Standards in Public Speaking Work," *English Journal*, XII, 223–234.

ting into ruts, and becomes increasingly open-minded and versatile. An experimental plan that may be very valuable is the arrangement of a conversation group.[8]

Preliminary class discussion should develop many general ideas for the conduct of conversation. Since on social occasions the prime necessity is to keep conversation going, our first thought must be to find numerous ideas and questions that may be introduced very naturally whenever there is an oppressive lull. We note that without awkwardness or strain mention may be made of current events just reported in newspapers, of new books or the latest issues of magazines, of recent entertainments in the community: in other words, of many occurrences which have come to notice within the last few days or few weeks. A question is good if it shows sincere interest in the person addressed or if it gives the person addressed an opportunity to talk about his hobbies and to display unusual knowledge. Women can often ask men questions about politics because men either have some information or think they have it. A certain woman who runs a household without masculine help says that in the winter months she can easily keep conversation going with any man if only she asks him what is the best kind of coal to use. In talking it is usually advisable to resort to light and frivolous subjects, such as fashion extremes or incoming fashions. Pedantry and formality in conversation are unpardonable sins. A person who mentions books that nobody else has heard about is dreaded like the pestilence. Subjects to be absolutely avoided include all

[8] See E. E. Dodd, *Fibre and Finish* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1925), Chapter VIII. The author of this text has been an originator in the field.

forms of self-advertisement, accounts of one's own bodily health, questions on which people differ deeply and fundamentally, personal gossip, and themes which infringe upon the right of others to reticence. Ideal conversation is the easy interchange of ideas and it abounds in spontaneous banter and humor. As our students consider the meaning of conversation and the equipment needed they will see the importance of information about recent events and of broad interest in connection with many fields of knowledge, such as art, music, education, hygiene, industry, economics, and politics.

After full discussion the conversation group is to be arranged for illustration. The arrangement of the group must not be announced until just before the time of carrying on the conversation. While oral composition should be carefully worked out, conversation must be entirely spontaneous. The teacher should select four or five students who have had large social experience, who are naturally communicative, and who will be interested in making the experiment as fruitful as possible. A tactful teacher will not explain just why certain students were selected but will state that he thought it best to select a part of the group and to call for three or four volunteers. The eight or nine students are then seated in the manner most favorable to group conversation while other members of the class become observers. The teacher suggests a string of topics, resort to which will be comparatively easy, such as moving pictures that any one has seen lately, the talkies, present fashions, aviation, improvements in cars, and a number of stirring events that have been reported in the papers during the last few days.

Students in the group may be asked to suppose that they have been thrown together by the chances of an afternoon tea and to converse as far as possible as if there were no observers. The teacher now becomes one of the observers and the group are left free to converse at will. Such an

High School Seniors Conducting a Conversation Class
The boy partly hidden from view has just told a first-rate joke.

exercise should usually be carried on for about ten or fifteen minutes. It is a delightful variation of the ordinary school routine.

103. **Special speeches.** — Attention may well be given to different kinds of short speeches. Every one is glad to have these questions answered: What are the characteristics

of a satisfactory assembly announcement? What does good taste prescribe as to the mode of introducing a distinguished person who is to give an address? In some classes it may be possible to select one or two students to make illustrative speeches. For instance, a certain teacher selected an able senior who had not been especially exposed to the limelight and in a personal conversation requested him to prepare a short illustrative after-dinner speech. The senior at first said that he had not the slightest idea how to proceed. The teacher replied, "I want you to imagine that you have returned to attend a high school alumni banquet a year from now. Tell me some things about your high school record that you are rather ashamed of." After a little hesitation the student said that he had been ridiculously afraid of a former principal and that he had dropped an important course because his grades in the course could be only medium. The teacher then showed him how to exaggerate for humorous effect, how to describe his numerous attempts at evading the formidable principal until the principal probably conjectured some deep-dyed guilt as the cause and how to unify his talk around the idea of not being a quitter just because of sharp competition. After the illustrative speech was given before the class, general discussion developed the idea that the humorous personal experience, if told frankly without the faintest suggestion of self-complacency, may afford a central theme for any brief speech of a social nature. Special projects of this type appeal to interest because students are eager to meet the language demands of social life.

XXIV. SOCIALIZED MANAGEMENT

Today there is a general demand for the socializing of school work. The "socialized recitation" means one in the management of which students have a large share. In many types of oral composition students can advantageously assume direction. We shall consider also some additional ways by which we may increase the social values of oral composition.

104. **Student officers.** — All oral composition work has the advantage that it can easily be socialized. A student president with a student secretary should be in charge. Before the student officers take charge, the teacher should emphasize the responsibility resting on the chairman. He should carefully illustrate the correct way for the chairman to announce a speech, the form which each speaker should use in addressing the chair, and the courtesy with which the chairman should give the floor to the speaker. The class discussion should make mention of the various blunders sometimes made by ineffective chairmen. It is profitable to have several students report suggestions given in Roberts' *Rules of Order* in regard to the duties of the chairman and the secretary. If careful preparation is made, the students will take extreme pride in the form with which they fulfill the obligations of their offices.

105. **Other modes of socializing.** — The socializing of oral composition work is further promoted by securing visitors. Though it is perhaps never possible absolutely to eliminate artificial elements in connection with school exercises, the presence of visitors tends to reduce such elements and to make oral composition more natural. Both parents and teachers of subjects other than English who happen to

have a free period are glad to visit and thus to aid us in making the composition day a gala day. Furthermore, as they provide the speakers with a large audience, they intensify motivation and effort. It is singular that this altogether legitimate and exceedingly valuable incentive is not more often utilized. Can it be that we teachers are unwilling to concede that our personal influence does not always secure the maximum effort? If so, we are making a serious mistake in permitting our pride to interfere with the success of the work.

The most important way to socialize oral composition is to secure keen and sustained class interest. Public speaking at any time or in any place should be viewed as a failure unless the auditors listen eagerly with no thought of ennui. In the class room the pleasure and interest of the auditors will be assured if all the speakers have studiously prepared and practiced their speeches, if they use no notes but look directly at the auditors, and if oral composition assignments are not too numerous. In our enthusiasm we must not carry oral composition to excess. We must remember the likelihood of an inverse ratio between the frequency of the exercise and the probable effort. The pupil profits more from ideal preparation of a dozen compositions than from indifferent work on three times as many. Many teachers can do their part more effectively if they make bi-weekly rather than weekly assignments in oral composition. Not being obliged so often to make lists of subjects, they can find more satisfactory subjects. Unfortunately, there is a current idea that overworked English teachers may get relief by making oral composition a general substitute for written.

The idea is a fallacy having its origin in a too meagre knowledge or consideration of the facts. In the first place, the aims of oral and written composition are not identical but widely divergent. In the second place, if a heavy proportion of class time is used in delivery of oral compositions, the auditors will be bored by the monotony. Even if the compositions are good, the class that is given such work too frequently will in the end have a sense of weariness. Everybody likes to hear a beautifully played concerto of Beethoven; but very few people would care to hear a dozen concertos played successively.

Ranking of the speeches by the class is still another mode of socializing the work. It operates as a beneficial incentive to the speaker and forces careful judgment by the class. The ranking must always be handed in before there has been any class criticism or discussion. Otherwise, students who lack self-confidence will hardly be able to make an independent verdict. Each student votes as to which speech of a group has been the best or as to which speech delivered during the period has been the best. On the blackboard are placed the names of those receiving three or more votes together with the exact number of votes cast for each. Similarly, after a junior or senior class debate all members not participating in the debate cast their vote as to which is the winning team and also rank relatively the six participating speakers. These ranks are counted and the results are placed on the board. Thus a debater who is on a losing team may be approved as the best individual speaker. Perhaps after debates held in less mature classes only the three highest ranks should be given publicity. The desire for

favorable ranking by fellow students is a potent influence leading to mighty effort. Since the votes are always somewhat distributed, the division of opinion as recorded on the blackboard calls the attention of the students to various elements determining merit and encourages breadth and charity of judgment.

Although the teacher and not the student officers should be in charge during the criticism of oral compositions, criticism by the class has a distinct value and is one element in socialized technique. He must be in charge because everything is dependent on his tact, judgment, and sincerity. He should remind the class that favorable comments, if only they are very specific, are just as helpful as adverse. A wise practice for the inexperienced teacher is to require that any one noting a fault shall first mention a definite merit. The recognition of whatever is meritorious goes far toward preserving sympathetic relations. It is obvious that the teacher must not only guide class criticism but must also supplement it. He should be sure that the student who has made a serious mistake in syntax or pronunciation is able to give the sentence correctly. He must commend merits which are the result of hard work rather than those which are the result of native advantages. He should not express his admiration of pleasing voice and manner, which are largely the result of well-developed physique and broad social experience. He should give due praise to extensive knowledge of the subject and fullness of treatment, to paragraph unity and strong emphasis, and to varied and effective diction. The discriminating approbation of an able instructor means continued zeal on the part of the students.

We have found oral composition a delightful and not difficult method of teaching English. The matter of greatest importance is motivation leading to earnest and faithful preparation by the pupil. Countless subjects are needed but they may be repeated with successive classes to a degree not practicable with subjects for written composition. The field of oral composition work has not yet been thoroughly canvassed. It affords clever and resourceful teachers numerous opportunities for experimenting. It yields enjoyment to students as well as to teachers because it can be so completely socialized.

SUBJECTS FOR ORAL EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPHS

Although oral composition subjects should at times deal with material that is altogether new to the class, some subjects that are more or less familiar are rich in possibilities. On the subjects that are here listed many students have done brilliant work. If students are allowed some selection from this list, they will be able to discover entertaining examples and illustrations for their themes.

1. It is easy to learn to talk without notes.
2. Political adherence is too often the result not of conviction but of heredity.
3. The first day in a new school is a trying one.
4. A public speaker should seldom begin with an apology.
5. Wide reading makes composition much easier.
6. A railway station affords an excellent opportunity to study human nature.
7. Extremes in fashion are often ludicrous.

8. Two or three sentences may be a clear index to the education of the speaker.
9. It is possible to get the most important news from a daily newspaper without spending a long time over it.
10. A circus is not only entertaining but also instructive.
11. The spectators at a ball game are as interesting as the game.
12. In using the telephone one should remember the rights of others.
13. The American sense of humor is manifest in every public place.
14. Borrowing is a bad habit.
15. Superstitions are common even among people who are not altogether uneducated.
16. By some attention to manner students can greatly improve the effect of their recitations.
17. "Bargains" are frequently not bargains.
18. Keeping up with the Joneses is the motive for much extravagance.
19. An entertaining letter is one that has much concrete description.
20. Travel is not a good substitute for regular schooling.
21. Moving pictures which show current events have great value.
22. The dog has many human traits.
23. The aerial mail service has an importance that will steadily increase.
24. Our own state is rich in natural beauty.
25. Much pleasure is to be derived from even a superficial study of stars and constellations.
26. Concentration saves time.
27. Unselfish people often make their friends and relatives selfish.
28. Oral composition will prevent embarrassment in later life.
29. People ought to give some attention to the tones of the voice.
30. The dictionary is not so dull a book as it is supposed to be.
31. In all large buildings fire drills should be frequent.
32. Everybody should learn to swim.

33. A few simple precautions may do much for the preservation of eyesight.
34. The touch system of typewriting is a valuable saving of eyesight.
35. The reading of biography is often more entertaining than the reading of novels.

MYTHS FOR ORAL COMPOSITION SUBJECTS

Most myths, being admirably constructed stories with effective culmination, are well suited to oral narration. They should be assigned a week ahead. Preliminary drill should be given to pronunciation. At least half a dozen copies of a mythology test (see page 315) should be accessible to the class. Each student should understand the importance of rounding out his story within a three-minute time limit. It is better to have each myth narrated by at least two students.

1. The Race of Atalanta
2. The Foolish Ambition of Phaethon
3. Baucis and Philemon
4. The Punishment of Niobe
5. The Judgment of Paris
6. Echo and Narcissus
7. Pyramus and Thisbe
8. The Touch of Midas
9. The Death of Meleager
10. Admetus and Alcestis
11. The Statue of Pygmalion
12. The Flight of Icarus
13. The Slaying of Argus
14. Pandora's Casket
15. Hero and Leander

16. The Sacrifice of Iphigenia
17. The Abduction of Proserpina
18. Theseus and the Minotaur
19. Apollo and Daphne
20. The Death of Hercules
21. The Feats of Jason in Colchis
22. Protesilaus and Laodamia
23. The Visit of Orpheus to Hades
24. Bellerophon and the Chimaera
25. The Contest for Athens between Neptune and Athene
26. The Fate of Arachne
27. Aurora and Tithonus
28. The Origin of the Pleiades as a Constellation
29. The Punishment of Midas by Apollo
30. Ceyx and Halcyone

ORAL COMPOSITION SUBJECTS BASED ON *The Merchant of Venice*

Oral composition is frequently a useful method of reviewing a literary selection. The best judgment of the teacher is needed in selecting subjects that are not too difficult, that include many points considered during the detailed study and that suggest some ideas not yet mentioned in class. This list of paragraph topics is suitable to ninth grade pupils who have completed a careful study of *The Merchant of Venice*.

1. In many ways the play gives us a powerful impression of Portia's beauty.
2. Portia has a brilliant intellect.
3. Portia has a strict sense of obligation, duty, and justice.

4. Portia constantly shows generous sympathies.
5. Though Nerissa is inferior to Portia, she is a vivacious congenial friend.
6. Antonio is a fine gentleman, devoted to his friends, a man whose faults are to be partly excused as the prejudices of his age.
7. The Prince of Morocco is a modest gentleman whose chief pride is in his physical strength.
8. The Prince of Arragon is the egotist of the play.
9. Salarino serves to interpret for us the public attitude toward characters and events.
10. Half clown and half rustic, Launcelot Gobbo adds much to the life of the play.
11. Although Gratiano is shallow and garrulous, we like him for his loyalty to his friends.
12. Lorenzo is the romantic and poetical character of the play.
13. The cruel treatment which Shylock has received is a partial excuse for his bitterness.
14. Bassanio is the character that links together the various groups.
15. The play owes much to opportunities for striking spectacular effects in stage presentation.

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Let a volunteer from the Methods class prepare to give a two-minute oral theme illustrating faults in manner of speaking. He should talk from the throat instead of using lips, teeth and palate and should close each sentence with the uncertain rising inflection. Immediately afterward let the volunteer give the same subject matter with distinct articulation, strong sentence conclusion and general decisiveness. This illustration should exemplify what a teacher might do in making an oral composition assignment.

2. Why does the average high school pupil think of oral composition as more completely an expression of himself than written composition ?
3. Let a member of the Methods class consult an experienced debating coach and obtain from him seven or eight frequent violations of good debating form. When these violations are reported to the Methods class, they should be recorded in notebooks for future reference.
4. What suggestions concerning conversation can you add to those given on pages 214–215 ?
5. What suggestions can you give to high school seniors about interviewing a business man in order to obtain employment under him ?
6. In order to show the value of graphic illustrations let some member of the Methods class prepare a brief talk concerning the location of the chief colleges and universities in your state. A suitable blackboard map can be quickly made.
7. Let two members of the Methods class consult local administrators or teachers and obtain from them for the Methods notebooks ten additional subjects connected with education, — subjects on which high school students would be able to prepare brief talks.
8. Let two members of the Methods class find ten more scientific subjects for oral themes — if possible, subjects which have been discussed in periodicals of the past two months.
9. Let two members of the Methods class select a contemporary author from the list on page 205 and each give a short oral theme covering the type of material which high school seniors should be able to present.
10. Frequently those selected for an important speech contest have duplicate or similar subjects. For instance, two students out of eight may treat some phase of war prevention, two others some phase of crime increase. A useful device can insure an excellent arrangement that is at the same time a matter of chance. Arrange the various subjects in a circle as the

hour figures on a clock are arranged. Keep similar subjects far apart and plan alternation of boys and girls. Prepare lots, all blank except one slip which has the number 1. Announce that the order will be fixed by the clock, speakers succeeding each other in the direction in which the hands of the clock move. Whoever draws number 1 thus fixes the arrangement of the group. Let some member of the Methods class clarify this scheme for the class through a diagram with definite subjects and names of speakers.

CHAPTER V

TRAINING FOR CORRECTNESS IN SPEECH AND WRITING

THE NEED FOR EMPHASIS ON ACCURACY

At the present time many pupils who have completed the first eight grades habitually make the most serious mistakes both in written and in spoken English. Accordingly, special attention must be given to accuracy. We shall consider how we may intelligently direct our efforts toward the attainment of correctness.

106. **Formal aspects of English.** — The specific training needed to secure correct habits in speaking and writing should be viewed as subordinate to the teaching of composition and of literature. Unfortunately, some educators presume that the correction of faults is the chief purpose of an English course. Perhaps they have reached this conclusion because they recognize that the speech of the average person can seldom charm by any special excellence and that it may offend by special faultiness. Possibly they have adopted this theory because they view the aim of other subjects as the teaching of content and consider the general educational program more consistent if English is to be chiefly a formal subject. But however natural such a conclusion may be, it can never gain acceptance. Ultimately, work dominated mainly by the aim of mechanical correct-

ness would be deadening. The result would be sterility, poverty of thought, poverty of vocabulary, inflexibility. No one ever made a fruitful garden by the mere pulling up of weeds; one must do some planting. Attention to mistakes in English must be viewed as the pulling up of weeds, a means toward an end.

In actual practice, however, far too little attention has been given to mistakes. As teachers of English we have tried to ignore the fact that incorrect forms of speech and writing are often common even with young people who have read broadly and who have some facility in original expression. In too many cases we have assumed that in the grades our students learned to use correctly the forms of pronouns and of irregular verbs and the conventions of business letters. While there has been a disagreeable question mark lurking in our subconscious minds and like Banquo's ghost bobbing up unpleasantly, we have periodically bidden it "Down." At times when we have been absolutely forced to notice the general inaccuracy, we have tried to regard our status as identical with that of the university professor: we have contended that it is our prerogative to teach not what is needed but what we prefer to teach. We have been successful in lulling our consciences by assuring ourselves that we teach best what we most enjoy teaching. We have been confirmed in our self-confidence by that minority among our students who are accurate because their own temperament demands exactness or because they have availed themselves of thorough training in foreign languages or because their home advantages have been exceptional. For the most part we have been able to forget the

saying that those who are whole need not the physician. From this pleasant lethargy it is time for us to rouse ourselves. When the commercial world is loudly demanding that we provide another kind of English teaching for young people who must earn their own living, it is indeed time for us to take a different view of our responsibility.[1]

Fortunately our responsibility for promoting accuracy is one that we have no good reason for evading. It is one that we can discharge easily and successfully if only we proceed in the right way. We need first of all to have clearly in mind the various categories or fields in which we must work for correctness and also the relative importance of these fields. In oral English there are three such fields, syntax, pronunciation, and diction. In written English there are five, syntax, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and the apostrophe. The reason for regarding diction as a matter of oral English is that only gross errors of diction need receive attention and these seldom appear in written composition. Of the various subjects in which accuracy is essential syntax is far the most weighty both because it is the only subject that enters into oral as well as written English and also because two other phases of written English, capitalization and punctuation, are directly determined by syntax.

107. **Co-operative effort of students.** — We must enlist the co-operative effort of our students toward the attainment

[1] Some harmless consolation for English teachers is offered by J. W. Searson, "The Public Contacts of the English Teacher," *English Journal*, XII, 450–459. After an extensive investigation analyzing spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, accuracy as to dates and quotations, appeal to interest of press abstracts, prepared by leading educators, he says: "The qualities educators in general have demanded in the products of our English teaching are present in relatively few of the compositions of the educational leaders themselves."

of syntactical correctness. We must create in them a desire to improve their speech. One way of creating this desire in some girls is to suggest the effect of ungrammatical English on social position. We may describe the shocked superciliousness with which the members of a literary club gossip about the solecisms of a presiding officer. We may sometimes influence boys by appealing to their natural craving for leadership and by showing that the men who dominate in a community are men whose speech is relatively correct. We may point out the fact that in any considerable group of people there are always some who note every blunder. By reminding our students of the amusement or disgust which they have felt on hearing "hadn't ought" or "you was," we may lead them to imagine the degree in which their own worse mistakes offend more sensitive ears. Whenever they have listened to an admirable public address, we have a chance to prove to them that a man who is really a master of language in its variety and subtlety is not willing to be guilty of bad syntax.

Our attempts to hold up language standards will be futile unless in our zeal we preserve sense of proportion. We must not be over precise.[2] We must never forget the irremediable harm done by insistence on a particular form if usage of educated people is divided. In truth, it is well to bear in mind the humiliating fact that the very term for unnatural, stilted, or prim language is "schoolmaster's English." We should not object to slang unless it is vulgar in character

[2] For a valuable investigation tending to show that approval may be given to many expressions often criticized, see S. A. Leonard and H. Y. Moffett, "Current Definitions of Levels in English Usage," *English Journal*, XVI, 345–359.

or is used so excessively as to impoverish the general vocabulary. We owe it to our students to let them know exactly what errors betray the lack of cultural advantages. We must never fail to make distinction between mild colloquialisms and wrong inflections, between the venial misdemeanors and the felonies of language.

We must not only create an ideal but we must also direct our students to the only way by which they may rapidly break confirmed habits of faulty speech and may establish the correct habits. This way is through steadily conscious observation and effort. Too many young people cherish the delusion that conscious watching of language and any sort of self-consciousness are the cause and not the cure of mistakes. How often the English teacher is informed by some artless student, "Miss A, I really make more mistakes in your class room than I do anywhere else because I can't keep from thinking about my language." The explanation of this absurd but prevalent notion is that our language pleases us best when it is most spontaneous. In a very important sense, indeed, it is best when it is uncontrolled. When we forget ourselves and are interested only in our ideas, it is richest, most fluent, and most picturesque. It is not best in the sense that it is necessarily free from mistakes. The fallacy in the current view must be apparent to any teacher who has read hundreds of themes; errors common in the speech of the writers are rare in the themes because the relatively slow process of writing encourages conscious watching.

On the other hand, mistakes in speech are most numerous when speakers are confident that their uncritical auditors

put the highest premium on ready response. If we watch our students grouped in halls and corridors, we are amazed both by their cleverness in repartee and by the blissful absorption that ignores countless mistakes in grammar and pronunciation. If further illustration is needed, we have only to consider what moment is the dangerous time for a man whose fireside English has been illiterate and who by painstaking vigilance has made himself a master of speech. When is he most liable to slip into some bad form of his childhood or youth ? The perilous moment is the moment of excitement, when reserve is forgotten and a torrent of feeling is sweeping words along. Newspapers recently reported an atrocious solecism twice introduced into a sentence by a United States Senator speaking on a question involving turbulent and acrimonious feeling.[3] Thus a habit presumably broken years ago reasserts its old power. The speaker, carried away by his enthusiasm, may not be aware of the blemish that startles his audience and knows only that his emotion has unlocked a large hoard of words. Such an instance should prove that though self-consciousness may be the cause of hesitating or awkward speech, it is never the cause of incorrectness. If school boys and girls perceive this truth, they may be willing temporarily to sacrifice their illiterate fluency for the purpose of ultimately attaining accurate fluency.

In order that our students may become sufficiently conscious of their own faulty habits of speech so that they may direct will power toward the formation of better habits, they must have the benefit of class room criticism. Unhappily

[3] *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 5, 1929, p. 10.

too many teachers fail to criticize class room mistakes in spoken English. The excuse most frequently offered for this sort of shirking is apparently not altogether sincere. The substance of the excuse is that the criticism causes the student to lose the trend of his thought and that repeated corrections mean accordingly a considerable loss of time. An English teacher who was criticized for failing during an entire period to note a single mistake made this defence, "You see, the English of this class is so very bad that if I were to correct it, I could do nothing else." Though her critic might have asked what else an English teacher should do in addition to teaching English, he merely made this judicious reply, "Your defence would be a sound one if you had selected a number of the most glaring errors and had given close attention to them."

The real causes for the neglect of criticism afford no better justification than does the specious excuse of "not wanting the student to lose the trend of thought." In some cases criticism is purposely avoided because teachers are truly afraid of the "tu quoque" retort. Those who have this fear ought to bear in mind that criticism may without disadvantage be mutual if the school morale is ideal. Another cause for neglect is poor observation. When a teacher says, "Our pupils use very good English," he usually proves that his own ear for correctness is far from acute. If he is right in thinking that the most offensive mistakes are never made, he is the more at fault in neglecting minor mistakes. Unquestionably the usual cause for omitting criticism of bad English is cowardice. A certain college teacher never informed his unfortunate students of their distressing mis-

takes but invariably raised his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders in order to demonstrate his sensitiveness to other students in the class. Any one so much afraid of suffering embarrassment or of causing embarrassment is hardly fitted for the work of teaching.

We must not permit the difficulties to deter us from giving criticism but must instead make the most of whatever judgment or tact we may possess. As far as possible we should let the speaker discover his mistake. Frequently nothing will be needed beyond the request, "Please correct your English." As a rule we ought not to interrupt students in the middle of sentences. Always in oral composition and often in other exercises we should wait until speakers have finished all that they have to say. It is a simple matter to jot down an incorrect sentence and to have the corrections made later. In grades above the elementary no harm is done by repeating the incorrect expression for a student who cannot recall just what he has said. In rectifying the mistake the student should always give the correct expression in its context. It is usually a waste of time for the teacher to mention a mistake without having the correction made by the pupil. Is it not apparent that the practice of giving the sentence once correctly is needed to counteract the influence of the mistake? After the correction has been made, we must be ready with the least possible loss of time to recall to the class the trend of thought that had been under consideration.

If we are careful enough, our criticism will not hurt the most sensitive person. Of course, it must be absolutely free from sarcasm, ridicule, or even censure. The two or three

especially defective pupils must not be made unpleasantly conspicuous. If the flagrant mistakes of their speech are faithfully noted, their minor mistakes may be passed over to the future. In some cases members of the class may make the correction. But we must always feel the responsibility of keeping a sympathetic atmosphere. To this end we must consistently present the view that language is a highly complicated instrument, that difficulties in using it are innumerable, and that the advantage which one person has over another in freedom from mistakes may be in part accidental. We should encourage students to recognize that they learn through making mistakes and that mistakes in the class room should never be a cause for mortification. Errors should be noted with perfect good nature, with full acceptance of the fact that though they are to be expected, our present job is to uproot them.

XXV. THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR

Objections to the teaching of grammar are in reality objections to the way in which it has been taught. The subject is itself difficult and we must improve our teaching technique. We must give students an understanding of the purposes of the work; we must secure the closest class concentration; in teaching principles we must as far as possible use sentences in which mistakes might be made; we must use concrete sentences that the memory can easily retain; in the early part of the work we must use simplified terminology.

108. Divided opinions of teachers. — As we desire to weed out syntactical errors, we feel the need of teaching grammar. It is true that improvement in speech has not invariably been the result of prolonged grammar teaching.

It is also true that the talk of children who in their own homes are exposed to the influence of excellent English is comparatively free from mistakes. These facts are used to justify a general assault on the teaching of grammar. In some large high schools this question has divided the English teachers into bitter opposing camps. The opponents of grammar, however, are constantly fewer. Modern tests have availed either to convince or to silence them.[4] Capitalization and punctuation, which can be tested with absolute accuracy, can have a firm basis only in thorough knowledge of sentence construction. Furthermore, the regrettable situation is that most students in their homes are constantly subjected to the influence of bad English. Intelligent pupils who are given an understanding of language principles can and do make practical applications and train themselves. If the high school student does not know the relation of subject and predicate, he is sure to use a plural verb when emphatic plural nouns intervene between a singular subject and the verb. If he does not understand subordinate clauses, he is likely to write a clause beginning with "while" as if it were a complete sentence. In reality the subject of grammar as a part of the English course should need no defence. The attack made against grammar ought rather to be directed against a too scientific method as opposed to a genuinely practical method and against crowding the entire subject into the immature years of the junior high school.

109. A better method. — Because grammar is abstract the teacher must give his class a clear explanation of pur-

[4] Cf. D. M. Wolfe, "Is Grammar Reviving?" *English Journal,* XVII, 852–854.

poses. In beginning the work with ninth grade classes he might talk in this way:

In your school work you have discovered by this time that some things which are a little dry and dull are very valuable. Although grammar is fully as important as the multiplication table, it is not so entertaining as literature. But it will help you both in writing and in speaking. In order to make this subject as easy and pleasant as possible, I shall not give you any assignments to study in a book. You may use your study time on your home reading books. In class all that you need to do is to pay very close attention and when you answer my questions, incorporate my question in your answer. We shall work on the subject for only two or three weeks and shall return to it later in the year. You will be surprised to see how easy and how interesting grammar will become.

By very practical lively teaching we may greatly reduce the difficulties in the way of comprehending sentence structure. We should not weight our teaching with complicated and excessively technical terminology. In some classes we may find it best not to talk about "pronouns" but about "short nouns," not to talk about "conjunctions" but about "tie words." We may even use imagery to illuminate some abstractions. We may compare the clauses of a compound sentence to the balances of a pair of scales. We may compare a co-ordinate conjunction to the rope used in tug-of-war with even groups on either side. We may speak of a preposition and its object as the pendulum cord and the pendulum weight. Instead of teaching students to say "Prepositions are followed by the objective case and the objective form," we may advantageously teach them to say "After such words

as *to, for, by, with, from,* we always use *me, us, him, her, them, whom.*" The inventiveness of the teacher may go far in skillful adaptation. After the students have triumphed over the initial difficulties through the aid of dramatization and colorful terminology, the teacher may conventionalize the work by introducing the traditional nomenclature.

We may further simplify by using the shortest, the most concrete, and the most striking illustrations available. To teach the contrary-to-fact subjunctive, we may use the sentence, "If I were a teacher, I wouldn't be cross." To teach the offensiveness of a dangling participle we may use the sentence, "Being the most popular girl, he wanted to take Miss Smith to the picture show." To teach the absurdity of misplacing modifiers we may use the sentence, "She wore a diamond coronet in her hair, which her father bought in New York." To teach the difference between a restrictive and a non-restrictive relative clause, the most concrete illustrations can be used: (1) "The Miss Smith who is a member of the freshman class was at the party;" (2) "Miss Dorothy Smith, who is a member of the freshman class, was at the party." The subject of grammar is made much easier through simple, vivid, illustrative sentences that are retained without effort.

Most of our illustrative sentences should be those in which mistakes are likely to occur.[5] If grammar teachers would make the avoidance of common errors the constant practical aim, some educators would talk much less about the futility of "technical grammar." Probably "technical grammar" is futile; practical grammar is not. Naturally such mistakes

[5] For a classified list of syntactical errors see pages 270–276.

as are often heard in the school room should receive special consideration. High school teachers who are afraid to place these incorrect examples before the class are hardly justified in their fear. Their view would be correct if they were teaching young children who must learn altogether by imitation and who cannot direct the formation of their own language habits. But adolescents can often master a principle of syntax through noting the contrast between the right and the wrong and can thus effectively direct their efforts toward eliminating the wrong. Obviously, in any case where the correct form is customary with most of the pupils, it is folly to mention the incorrect. But if a wrong expression has been uttered ninety-nine times in their hearing, no harm can be done by placing it before them a hundredth time in order to brand it. By way of illustration, in many localities a response not seldom given to a teacher's question is, "I don't know as I can tell." It is, therefore, advantageous to teach the noun clause by means of the sentence, "I don't know that I can tell." After developing the idea that the object of "do know" is "that I can tell," a noun clause, the teacher should call attention to the fact that "that" is a "tie word" which often introduces noun clauses but that "as" is a "tie word" which can introduce only adverb clauses. Since common errors are connected with all parts of speech and with every form of sentence, the study of all common syntactical errors means a fairly comprehensive study of grammar. Only those phases of grammar should be taught that in the class room discussion are definitely connected with the usages of speech or of punctuation.

110. **Habit-forming exercises.** — On points where stu-

dents have used the wrong form a thousand times habit-forming exercises are indispensable. Inexperienced teachers should not be misled by educators who attack drill as waste. It is true that drill would hardly be needed if the correct language usage had been steadily enforced both at home and at school and if deviation had never passed unchecked. It is also true that drill might be vastly reduced if children with unfortunate language background had strong teachers of English in every grade. But is it not folly to plan our language program on the basis of Utopian conditions ? Ordinarily we are confronted with the stern necessity of working vigorously and energetically to overcome deplorable language habits in which our students have been confirmed. Considerable drill should be given orally. For instance, the teacher may ask that a form of *lie* or *lay* be supplied in a long series of sentences of this sort:

> The town where I live —— north of the river.
> Please let my papers —— where I —— them.
> She left the book —— on the grass.

Similarly the teacher gives a series of sentences of which the blanks are to be filled with *who* or *whom*. Another way of giving the needed drill is through books of practice leaves which the students purchase. A vast amount of such material has been recently published and has come into general use. The results are such as to afford gratification.

Another exercise directly based on language uses in the school has definite value as a temporary expedient. The teacher calls on students for reports of mistakes heard within the preceding twenty-four hours. A portion of the sentence

should be quoted so that the character of the mistake may be quite clear but of course all personal reference is to be avoided. A different student from the one reporting the mistake should make the needed correction. A ruling that no single type of mistake is to be reported twice within one school week will mean that many different kinds of mistakes are brought to the attention of the class. Reports of mistakes may be made sometimes by volunteers, and sometimes by particular students who have been given the task of watching. If for a few weeks five minutes of the daily period are used in these reports and the incidental discussion of mistakes, there will often be marked results in sharpened observation and consequently in the weeding out of common errors.

XXVI. PRONUNCIATION AND DICTION

In no phase of English teaching is it more essential to apply trained judgment than in pronunciation and diction. The teacher must recognize that on certain points of pronunciation different localities are entitled to independent standards. Avoiding excessive fastidiousness, he must strive to correct general slovenliness or distinct illiteracy of pronunciation. He should have a liberal attitude toward all faults of diction except the most offensive vulgarisms and barbarisms.

111. **A need for breadth of view.** — The teaching of pronunciation demands large intelligence. There must be due allowance for local standards. Leading authorities recognize a standard Eastern speech, a standard Southern speech, a standard Middle-Western speech, and even other standard variations.[6] No good can result from attempting

[6] See John S. Kenyon, "Pronouncing American English," *English Journal*, XVII, 454–457.

to impose on all localities one particular pronunciation of the letter "r" or one particular pronunciation of such a word as "laugh." Although Bernard Shaw has expressed the wish that the speech of Forbes-Robertson might through phonograph records be broadcast as the standard accent for the English language in all countries, it is obvious that such rigidity and definiteness would do infinitely more harm than good. Standards are necessary but they should be as liberal and flexible as possible. The teacher's own pronunciation should be that of well educated people in his native locality. The attempt of a Middle-Westerner to talk like an Easterner or a Southerner is usually pathetic. In the case of a teacher it may even be disastrous, for strained pronunciations invariably suggest affectation. Moreover, it is well to bear in mind the fact that there is such a thing as over-refinement in pronunciation and that teachers are occasionally in danger of it.

112. **Teaching and testing.** — At the same time in the interest of better speech the improvement of pronunciation is of no slight moment. High school students should understand that a speaker whose vowel tones are not true grates on his auditors as unpleasantly as a pianist who cannot keep exact time or a singer who constantly flats. Some high school students are nearly as deficient in ear as the child who defined "tint" in the line, "There's not a tint that paints the rose," as "something that Indians live in." Typical mistakes are the pronunciation of "attack" as if it ended in "kt," of "quantity" with the first "t" ignored, of "government" with the "n" ignored. In some localities "address" is regularly accented on the first syllable, "contrary" on the second.

Failure to use an obscure sound for the second syllable of "theater" and the final syllable of "president" is extremely common. Current mistakes in pronunciation are due to ignoring the form of the word, to adoption of provincial accent or of the quality given locally to the vowels of certain words, to the confusion of different words, to the difficulty of pronouncing some combinations, and to bad ear for sound. A tendency to stress obscure syllables is a characteristic of many people who read constantly and who have had very few opportunities for talking with people of broad culture. The ear training that is necessary to correct such faults should be given through systematic class practice. For three or four weeks the teacher places daily on the blackboard ten words frequently mispronounced. He pronounces these words in groups of three or four and rehearses various members of the class on them. In from five to ten minutes all the students should be able to give a flawless pronunciation of the ten words. Daily as the new list is added, a minute or two should be given to a review of the list used on the preceding day. The lists, from whatever source obtained, should be supplemented by words that have been mispronounced in the regular school routine. Occasionally the ear training should be reënforced by having the class copy from the dictionary the diacritical marking of a short list. Work on the various lists not only gives the pupils a considerable number of true pronunciations but it also develops a general interest in watching and learning the pronunciation of many other words.

At the end of a month a pronunciation test should be given covering the two hundred words included in daily

work.[7] In making the assignment the teacher explains the plan of a pronunciation test: that each student will be given ten words to pronounce; that the grade will be 100 per cent if no mistakes are made, a bare pass if one mistake is made, zero if more words than one should be wrong; that the pupil is responsible for making his one attempt at pronunciation of each word heard by all the class. Before the test the words are written in groups of ten on the blackboard so that the number of groups is identical with the number of pupils in the class. Each group of words should be a promiscuous list made from words pronounced on different days of the preceding month. Any given word should appear in not more than two groups. The task of writing the groups may be done by the pupils provided the teacher arranges the distribution of words in the different groups. In calling on pupils to pronounce a group it is best to skip around so that no student can tell which group will be taken next or which group will fall to his own lot. This type of oral test is sure to be interesting, lively, and profitable. After the completion of the test there should be a final practice in pronouncing correctly all words that have been found troublesome. To a marked extent the true pronunciation thus acquired becomes habitual with the students.

113. **Diction.** — Faults in diction need not have the stress given either to pronunciation or to syntactical blunders. They should, however, through discussion be given classification. Words that have no proper place in the language, commonly called barbarisms, should be stigmatized, such as "ain't," "enthuse," "complected," "eats." Improprieties

[7] A pronunciation list is given on pages 267–269.

should be defined as words used with a meaning which does not belong to them. Common illustrations are "aggravate" used as if it meant "irritate," "stop at a hotel," as if "stop" meant "stay." Students should note that ignorance is usually the cause of barbarisms and improprieties as it is not of slang. Slang may be defined as embracing expressions which from some humorous association have acquired temporary vogue. The teacher should be very tolerant of slang and should never correct it in either the speech or the writing of his students. He should explain, however, that slang very quickly loses its smartness and that obsolete slang is much worse than old-fashioned garments. He may call attention to the fact that slang is usually vague and inexpressive. Such an expression as "He is all in," might mean "He is ill," or "He has the blues," or "He was hurt in a football game." All kinds of mistakes in diction should be studied in the diction glossary of the rhetoric text.

After completing the study of a glossary, a written diction test should be given. By such a test we may gauge with extreme precision the extent to which our teaching of diction has been appropriated and we may compare results in the case of different students. The test should include some mistakes and some traps consisting of correctly used words on which people frequently make mistakes. If mastery is not thorough, the student is more likely to change what is right than he is to leave the wrong uncorrected. To illustrate: we give in the test the sentence, "Though he had never been regarded as underhand, most everybody sort of suspicioned him from that time." We have a right to expect the rewritten sentence to read, "Though he had never been

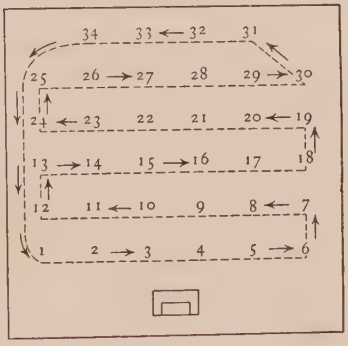
regarded as underhand, almost everybody more or less suspected him from that time." But the careless student will change the correct "underhand" to the wrong "underhanded" or possibly make the absolutely unnecessary change from the idiomatic "everybody" to "every one." The count of unnecessary changes and of uncorrected faults gives a total by which we can judge relative correctness in diction.

XXVII. THE TEACHING OF SPELLING

We now pass from training that will secure correctness in speech to training that will secure correctness in writing. Syntax, as we have already noted, concerns both oral and written English. The attainment of correctness in spelling is largely dependent on intelligent methods.

114. A mode of correcting papers. — Correctness of oral as well as of written English must largely be tested through writing. The question is, therefore, how is it possible to read so many tests. Of this problem there is a very satisfactory solution. Teachers very often fail to distinguish between the correction of original themes and the correction of mechanical exercises. Though overburdened teachers must themselves correct original papers and are therefore obliged to limit the number of these papers, they need not often correct mechanical exercises. The rotary system of passing such exercises makes it possible for the students to correct all mistakes and to report definitely on mistakes. This system is free from the objections inseparable from the old-time method of "exchanging papers." Under the exchange system by which A reads B's paper and B reads A's, A is likely to be lenient in marking B's paper in the hope that B may show the same liberality. Under the rotary

system there is no such temptation, for A and B do not exchange papers. The diagram shows the direction in which the papers may move. When the teacher gives the word, "Pass papers once," the papers move up one place in the prescribed direction. They can then move on systematically just as fast as the calls are given, "Twice," "Three times," "Four times," "Five times," "Six times." Within less time than one minute the papers can move half way up the class. It is true that the paper of number 34 must go around to number 1 but if the teacher assists at this point, there need be no appreciable delay. On different occasions there should be variation in the number of times the papers are passed so that no student will repeatedly correct the paper of another writer.



After the papers have passed the requisite number of places, the teacher reads the points to be noted, capitals, various punctuation marks, and spelling, and the students mark the errors and make inventories of the errors at the end of the papers. The teacher then collects the papers for whatever record he wishes to make at the end of the day. Either during the period or later each writer must see his paper and note his own errors. The rotary system with class correction means no waste of time because important points are given oral emphasis. The incalculable value of the system is that it saves the teacher and furnishes reliable results. The

system is applicable to all written work which is determined by habit rather than by logical analysis or original thought. Consequently, it is especially useful in the teaching of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and the apostrophe.

115. **Spelling needs.** — As high school English teachers we are beginning to teach spelling and to seek more effective methods.[8] In former years high school teachers have been much inclined to leave spelling alone. There have been many explanations for past neglect. The absurd idea has been incredibly diffused that some people spell easily and others simply cannot learn to spell. Mark Twain said that spelling was bestowed on him as a natural endowment and that it was not bestowed on his clever children. He apparently gave no consideration to his early years of typesetting or to the lack of such training in the case of his children. There has also been a vague pedagogical notion that there is little credit in handling mechanical phases of teaching. At times we have been disposed to justify our neglect of spelling by arguing that the work properly belongs to the grades. Besides, we have been misled by the spelling reformers. But we have now discovered that their promised phonetic millennium is a delusion and a humbug and that the donning of our ascension robes was premature. Sadder and wiser, we have found that we live in a humdrum world where spelling is a necessity. The vocational expert of a

[8] The research work and ideas of Dr. Ernest Horn have influenced this discussion of high school spelling. See Ernest Horn, "Principles of Method in Teaching Spelling as Derived from Scientific Investigation," *The Eighteenth Year Book of the National Society for the Study of Education* (Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1922). See Ernest Horn and Ernest J. Ashbaugh, *Lippincott's Horn-Ashbaugh Speller* (Philadelphia: J. B Lippincott Company, 1920), Preface.

certain university is in the habit of saying to any bad speller, "Mr. ——, I advise you to choose a vocation in which you will not need to spell." Though the advice is perhaps meant seriously, there is an ironic hint that it is rather easier to learn to spell than to find a vocation in which spelling is never needed.

Being now anxious to get results, we are throwing overboard the ineffective methods of the past. We are selecting word lists which are based on the frequency with which the words occur in ordinary use and on the difficulty of spelling. We are no longer ambitious to turn out one or two champion spellers able to spell *ichthyosaurus* and *pterodactyl,* words which seldom appear in business or friendly correspondence. Instead, we are trying to give everybody enough practice in writing *February, sincerely, occasionally, disappoint,* words which we constantly need in letters. Many spelling lists of recently published composition texts are useful and satisfactory. The compilers of these lists have rightly depended on observation of misspelling in themes to decide what are the difficult words. In all grades above the eighth the major part of the misspelling in themes is restricted to two or three hundred spelling demons.[9] The mastery of these demons need not take an undue amount of time and it will have astonishing remedial value.

It is apparent that if the high school English course gives appropriate attention to spelling demons, it can hardly include the spelling of a specialized vocabulary used in some

[9] For evidence that professional investigations in regard to spelling have given much more attention to grades below the eighth than to those above, see C. H. Ward, "The New Knowledge of Spelling," *English Journal,* XI, 78–88, especially p. 80.

technical subjects. The English teacher ought, indeed, to inquire of history, science, and mathematics teachers as to any words of a non-technical nature which they have observed are often misspelled by their pupils. In the interest of co-operative effort he should put such words as are furnished in his lists for drill. On the other hand he can hardly be expected to teach the spelling of *Lincoln, Napoleon, Clemenceau.* It is the place not of the English teacher but of the mathematics teacher to teach the spelling of *quotient, hypotenuse, isosceles.* If the physiology teacher wants his pupils to spell correctly such words as *œsophagus, pharynx, myopia,* he should teach the spelling of such words himself. It is the duty of the English teacher to secure correct spelling of such words as often occur in the correspondence of well educated people.[10]

116. **Procedures.** — Since the problem is complex, the best results can be secured by using a number of methods. The teacher is offered these suggestions:

1. Give some attention to the spelling of prefixes and suffixes and to the effect on spelling of prefixes, suffixes, and inflections. Illustrative demons are "tries" and "stubbornness."

2. Part of the time teach spelling in connection with pronunciation. For this purpose use lists in which mispronunciation seems to be due to ignorance concerning the form of the word. Illustrative words are "temperament," one syllable of which pupils tend to drop, and "casualties," to which they often add a syllable.

3. Teach carefully the chief rules for spelling but bear in mind that they assist with a rather small percentage of demons.

4. Give some attention to the danger spot of a demon, such as the second vowel of "separate" and the first vowel of "pursue."

[10] See the spelling lists on pages 277–278.

5. So group words in lists as to emphasize danger spots. "Omit" and "commit" should be in proximity, as "persistence" and "assistance" should be.

6. Have a plan for releasing from spelling exercises students who are accurate enough not to need them. Such a plan has the value of preventing waste and of affording an incentive to less accurate students who may wish to be released.

7. Have numerous reviews with considerable intervals between the first testing and the review.

8. See that each student keeps a list of words which he has misspelled.

Teachers who have had any experience with high school spelling testify to the practical value of these directions. Let us now consider the actual handling of a high school spelling lesson. All spelling lessons, of course, should be written. Few enough words should be assigned so that every pupil can master them perfectly. Ten common troublesome words may be daily assigned four days out of the week. The fifth day is to be reserved for a review of the entire forty words. The teacher should explain beforehand that he expects a student who misspells any words in the list of ten to hand in three carefully made copies of the misspelled list and also of the list for the following day. In making copies students should not be permitted to write the first word three times and then the second word three times but instead they should be required in each copy to write the ten words consecutively. Those who have made these advance copies seldom make mistakes in the next lesson and consequently no one becomes delinquent in a cumulative degree. When the words are dictated in class, they should be given in an order different from that in the assigned list.

The papers should be passed by the rotary system and corrected by the class. Each critic should make a signed report. There is much to be said for giving just two grades, perfect and zero. The goal is perfection. The papers should be collected and filed for a few days in case questions arise. A teacher who handles the work in this way can have the ten words written, papers passed and corrected, and grades recorded in ten minutes. With a class of twenty-five under ordinary conditions it is easy to get twenty-four perfect papers. More class time must be used on the day when the review list of forty words is given. If words are misspelled in the review list, a time should be arranged for the handing in of additional copies and for repeating the test in order to remove the delinquency.

It is true, indeed, that the mechanical plan outlined above does not suffice to secure results in the spelling of homonyms. For this purpose preliminary oral drill with varied associations is advisable. To illustrate, the teacher must call out for oral spelling one expression after another of this sort: *the principal of the high school; the principal difficulties; a man of high principles; a principle that determines our conduct; the principal causes; a principle of mathematics; principal and interest.* Later in the written spelling which serves as a test some of these same connections should be dictated. Yet though the teaching of homonyms is necessarily more complex than the teaching of other words, the same absolute surety should be the goal.

In striking contrast to these truly efficient methods a practice may be mentioned which is far too common among English teachers. Many teachers, in some respects of a high

order of excellence, are actually teaching their pupils to misspell. A certain teacher in a large high school recently gave a review lesson on a hundred words that had been previously covered in shorter lists. She counted off one per cent for each mistake made and expressed herself as very much pleased because a majority of the class made as much as eighty-five per cent, misspelling not more than fifteen words! The students, too, who had learned to consider eighty-five per cent a very good grade, were gratified by the result. Since such handling of the work solidifies bad habits, the entire omission of spelling would be preferable.

If in addition to the systematic teaching of spelling some simple spelling requirements are observed, accuracy is practically insured. As a prerequisite to promotion in each year of the senior high school work, all students should be expected recurrently to prove themselves able to write correctly a short spelling test. This requirement is in accordance with the principle of reducing the number of words and of securing perfection on these words. The requirement adds little, if any, additional burden to teacher or students. One excellent high school in a suburb of Chicago uses a well selected list of two hundred words and requires the perfect yearly spelling of this particular list by all students. The reasonableness of the requirement lies in the necessity that we should be able to spell at any time commonly used difficult words and that on these words we should never be uncertain, never hesitate, never make mistakes.

A moderate degree of attention should be given to syllabication. Such general principles as division after a prefix and before a suffix and between the letters of a double

consonant should be amply illustrated. Occasionally the syllables should be marked in a spelling list written on the board. The list should include some words with double consonants, such as *be-gin-ning;* some words showing the influence of derivation on division, such as *de-scrip-tion;* some long monosyllables, such as *planned.* But since divisions are seldom needed, the teacher should not expect the class to divide words in the written spelling exercise. Whenever he spells orally so that the pupils may correct exercises, he should be absolutely accurate in division and should make his divisions clear and distinct.

XXVIII. PUNCTUATION AND DICTATION EXERCISES

Punctuation should be taught at first through practice on unpunctuated material. Habits of correct punctuation can be assured by good dictation exercises. Dictation exercises are also the best means of teaching capitalization and the apostrophe and they are a powerful reënforcement in the teaching of spelling.

117. **The teaching of punctuation.** — Investigations tend to show that people whose education is on the high school level make more mistakes in punctuation than in any other one thing. Many mistakes in punctuation, however, are of minor consequence in comparison with misspelling or with solecisms. The most vicious mistake, the failure to know where a sentence begins and ends, must receive early and persistent attention. In teaching such marks as the comma or the semicolon it is better not to begin with rules but to begin with unpunctuated sentences. Most composition texts have a special list for practice on each punctuation mark. Under the teacher's guidance the student

should decide where the mark is needed and should select the rule that applies. After sentences have been worked over that comprehend the chief rules for any one mark and after the rules are thoroughly understood, practice should be given in clear oral statement of rules. Texts usually have also review exercises in which all sorts of marks are to be inserted. The complex problem here presented is both the selection of the needed punctuation mark and also the selection of the principle involved.

118. **Dictation exercises.** — The dictation exercise is another method of teaching punctuation. The current prejudice against dictation exercises is not justified. This prejudice is mainly due to mistakes made by teachers who have lacked clear purposes. Teachers deficient in originality have sometimes given an excessive amount of dictation and at the same time have not striven for a definite result. The prejudice against dictation is partly due also to the erroneous belief that the practices of dictation will not "carry over." Those who hold this view misinterpret the modern view of formal discipline. It is quite true that memorizing a Greek conjugation will not aid one in learning to play golf. But it is equally undeniable that copying and inserting the quotation marks of a dialogue will greatly aid a pupil in using them in his written report of a conversation that he has heard. The practices of the dictation exercise "carry over" to such an extent that few corrections are needed in the next original theme involving similar punctuation problems.

Proper handling of dictation means first of all a suitable exercise. As far as may be possible an exercise should be

selected to illustrate those points that are likely to be most needed in the next original composition work. The exercise must be simple enough and short enough for every willing worker to master it. It must not contain words which the pupil will not need in speech or writing. If dialogue is used for the purpose, it must not contain incorrect dialect. Often the dictation exercise may be a news paragraph from such periodicals as the *Literary Digest,* the *Outlook,* and the *Nation.* Sometimes it may be an original one prepared by the teacher to exemplify definite matters of form or punctuation. The following is an illustration:

Last Wednesday while I was studying in the high school library, I overheard an interesting bit of conversation between a junior boy and a sophomore girl.

"How did you get along in your term examinations?" he asked.

"All right in English and history and French," she answered. "I've learned though that people's ideas about some things are wrong and that it doesn't pay to believe the things people tell you."

"What do you mean?" he inquired.

"Why, all my life I've heard it said that coffee makes the brain active and I know it doesn't," she declared in a very positive way. "I took it just before my algebra examination and I flunked."

Proper handling of dictation means not only good material but also an instructive type of assignment. For instance, in the foregoing exercise the teacher develops the reasons for capitalizing "Wednesday," "English," "French"; he shows that there is no reason for capitalizing "history" and "algebra." He calls attention to the possessive apostrophe in

"people's" and to the several contraction apostrophes. He gives a caution about such spelling demons as "studying," "interesting," "asked," "all right." He emphasizes punctuation: that the "while" clause is a long dependent clause preceding the main clause and, therefore, takes a comma; that commas are used to separate quotations from the rest of the sentence unless the quotation is a question or an exclamation; that if a question mark is needed, a comma must not be used with it; that the indentation for each change of speakers adds vastly to clearness. The teacher then urges the students to copy the exercise with extreme exactness and to study it so that they may write it perfectly the next day. If he has the right sort of general influence, he will do no harm by rigid requirements. It is well to have it understood that a student who makes any serious mistake will be expected to hand in an ink copy and to take the dictation again. This requirement, if consistently observed, eliminates carelessness that might otherwise mar results. It does not cause friction for students genuinely appreciate a teacher who is exacting on important points and they seldom criticise strict requirements that are clearly explained ahead of time and that serve directly a justifiable purpose.

Proper handling means also very careful testing on the day appointed. The teacher should dictate the exercise distinctly and evenly and should repeat no part until the class have finished writing the whole; he should next have the papers passed a number of places by the rotary system and should require each critic to sign his name so that he may be held responsible for marking all errors. He should expect the critics to note any variation from a straight left-

hand margin or from uniformity in depth of paragraph indentation and to indicate any failure to observe the law of double spacing between sentences. He should read slowly all capitalization, all marks of punctuation, and the spelling of all words except the easiest. After the critics have listed mistakes, he should collect the papers. He should encourage effort by reading with approbation the names of those whose papers were perfect.

Dictation exercises should be used not only for improvement in punctuation and general form but also for practice on matters of special difficulty. To illustrate, both grade and high school teachers usually give rather careful instruction in the rules for the apostrophe in possessives and in contraction and then count that the original writing which is to be done later will afford opportunity for application. Possibly such teaching is effective as far as the most intelligent pupils are concerned.[11] But results would be permanent in the case of all students as well as in the case of a selected one-third if only lists for practice on the apostrophe were dictated just as spelling lists are dictated. Similarly, however valuable is the careful development of the principles underlying the use of the semicolon, immediate practice on illustrative sentences makes the future application infinitely easier.

Furthermore, the conventions of letter writing should be taught through dictation exercises as well as through original letters. The ineffectiveness of present instruction in let-

[11] Cf. Irma Davis and Jenny Lind Green, "An Experiment with A, B, and C Intelligence Groups," *English Journal*, XIII, 457–462: "While there is little variation in the kinds of English facts these children all need in order to carry out their projects, there is wide variation in the amount of drill needed to fix these facts and to develop habits."

ter writing is probably connected with the difficulty of assigning a number of original letters large enough to include all possible conditions. A certain high school teacher has accumulated a curious collection of faulty letters that are significant commentaries on public education in the United States. One of these letters, in most respects highly intelligent, was written by a school board member seeking a good teacher for a pioneer community: the writer, who had had at least a common school education, evidently never received instruction about addressing a woman who might be a total stranger and instead of beginning, "Dear Madam," he begins, "Fair Lady." The fact is that in any average collection of several hundred letters written by high school graduates one finds every conceivable punctuation mark used after the salutation, several dozen improper kinds of salutation, and several dozen improper modes of complimentary close. If short model letters illustrating the chief standard forms were extensively used for dictation exercises, there would be a vast improvement in all the purely formal matters of letter writing.

XXIX. CORRECTIVE EXERCISES

Special exercises are needed not only to fix correct habits but also to compensate for inadequate training in earlier grades. One method of supplementing deficient preparation is to select daily for instruction or drill a specific technical principle. A second plan of remedial work is to give individual assignments to the most inaccurate students. A third plan is the hospital class.

119. **Class remedial work.** — In addition to the general problems of training for correctness there is a special problem arising from the inefficiency of preceding teachers. Not

seldom in teaching advanced classes we find that the English foundation on which we are supposed to erect a superstructure is poorly built and unstable. We discover perhaps that the work properly belonging to the seventh or the ninth grade was done in flimsy fashion or not done at all. We know that it is not possible for us to do again all the ninth grade work in addition to the twelfth grade work. But even for this problem there is at least a partial solution. It does not consist in abusing previous teachers, who may have been better than their salaries. It consists rather in selecting daily for careful teaching and drill one important technical point. Among the points that might be so considered are the following:

(1) Common errors in verb number: "There was several cars parked"; "Each of them were"; "Neither of them were"; "He don't try."
(2) Errors of pronoun after preposition: "kind to we girls"; "kind to my sister and I."
(3) Errors of verb object: "Who did you invite?" "She invited my brother and I."
(4) Error of adjective for adverb: "He sure tried"; "real unselfish."
(5) Faulty pronoun reference: "It says" (meaning "the textbook").
(6) Faulty arrangement: "He stood wiping his moist forehead on the porch."
(7) Lack of parallelism: "She usually wears brown; her sister's color is blue."
(8) Failure to express mode contrary to fact: "I wish I was tall."
(9) Inconsistency in tenses: "She looked troubled and he says, 'It's my fault.'"

(10) Errors in *shall* and *will*: "Will you miss me when I am gone?" "Of course I will miss you."
(11) Dangling participle: "Seeing her mistake, her cheeks became flushed."
(12) Errors of redundance: "I am equally as tall."
(13) Rules for apostrophe showing possession.
(14) Standard abbreviations.
(15) Drill on expressions involving usage in capitalization.

If during two or three months the first one-fourth of the class period is used for the purpose of strengthening students in these and similar points, the results in technical improvement will surprise and gratify both teacher and students. The plan means only a little less progress in the regular advance work, and is of immeasurable benefit to a large proportion of the class.

120. **Provisions for very inaccurate students.** — We have also the problem of students who have confirmed bad habits. One remedy is the assignment of special corrective exercises. Students who lack sense of form are likely to acquire it if they copy in a careful way perfectly edited prose. The passages selected should be faultless English, interesting to the student, and very clear and simple. Many pages admirably suited to the purpose can be found in Irving's tales, Hawthorne's short stories, Thackeray's or George Eliot's novels, and Macaulay's essays. It is essential that the copying be absolutely accurate and that the teacher refuse to credit work with a single mistake in either spelling or punctuation. The close observation necessary on the part of the writer often results in rapid improvement. Individual assignments should also be made in order to correct particu-

lar mistakes. If two or three people make mistakes on the past tense of the verb *give,* they need the practice of a short written exercise in addition to the class correction of spoken English.

But the truly sovereign remedy for deficient students is the hospital class. The term "hospital class" is used here merely because it best carries the idea. The tactful teacher will probably find it convenient to use some such term as "mechanics class." Every high school English teacher should meet once a week for twenty minutes or a half hour all his students who are far below standard in the mechanical aspects of written work. It is wise to require this work only of the limited number who most need it, perhaps ten or fifteen per cent of the teacher's total enrollment. It is necessary to hold the class at a time when students with very different schedules can meet; possible times are the beginning or end of the noon hour, the close of school in the afternoon, or Saturday morning. In some cases it will be advantageous to assign work on practice leaves. If the practice leaves are in systematic use in the regular classes, those portions of exercises not taken in the regular classes may be the assignment of the hospital class. In other cases the teacher may so diagnose the weaknesses of the deficient students that he sees the way to make special remedial exercises. Such exercises should be placed on the board for students to copy a week before the meeting. Sometimes the assignment may be a spelling list, sometimes a list illustrating capitals, sometimes a list illustrating the apostrophe, sometimes sentences with blanks to be filled by forms of irregular verbs, sometimes a dictation exercise to teach punctuation.

It is a good plan at each meeting to include the lesson of the preceding week as a review. The class time of twenty minutes or more is used in writing from dictation part or all of the work that has been prepared. The advantages of the hospital class cannot be overrated. This self-imposed responsibility places the teacher in an ideal position with reference to demotions or retardations. Although to a certain extent accuracy is in the same ratio with intellectual energy and alertness, there are signal exceptions to this ratio. Every teacher has one or two bright students who constantly hunt short-cuts, who absorb much knowledge in easy ways, and who are very expert in evading the more tedious activities. A student of this order is one who is likely to say that he cannot learn to spell. Through the hospital class he discovers that the responsibilities which he has hitherto managed to shirk can no longer be shaken from his own shoulders. Fond parents cannot afford to criticize the retardation of a son who has received much individual attention and who has failed to meet just and reasonable requirements in minimum essentials. But the superlative advantage of the hospital class is that the willing worker, finding that the assignment is entirely within his power, prepares it perfectly each week and thus makes sure and steady progress. The English teacher who for the first time tries the hospital class will find many of his problems solved and will have a new feeling of triumph in his accomplishment.

In our consideration as to how we may train students to be correct, we are working on a phase of education that is temporarily practical rather than ideally efficient. A discern-

ing teacher naturally deplores the large waste involved in attempting to counteract dozens of adverse influences. If we consider the extent of these adverse influences and the unhappy effect of much home and community English, we shall not be discouraged because our accomplishments fall below our hopes and aims. We can do much that is worth while, if we arouse the student's interest in weeding out his own errors. We must teach in a lively way those phases of grammar that can be immediately connected with correct forms in speech and writing. We shall find it easy to make the study of diction and of pronunciation pleasurable and entertaining. The pupil enjoys his newly acquired power to observe distinctions in sound. An intelligent procedure in punctuation teaching is to give carefully graded practice in putting punctuation marks in unpunctuated material. The statement of rules is to follow, not to precede, the practice. We should not carry dictation exercises to excess but if we use them with intelligent purpose, we can make the subject of punctuation less formidable to young writers. We should give additional practice to those members of our classes who in accuracy are far below the general average. In all our teaching of usage we must sedulously avoid pedantic attitudes. We must show our students that the English language is flexible in the highest degree. We should present the matter of accuracy as fundamentally subsidiary to variety and expressiveness. The task of teaching standard usage becomes enjoyable to the teacher because students deeply appreciate the social and commercial values of correctness.

WORDS OFTEN MISPRONOUNCED*

Especially common words often mispronounced:

because	bē-kôz′	was	wŏz
every	ĕv′-rĭ	what	hwŏt
Mrs.	mĭs′-ĭz	yours	yo͝orz

Words in which mispronunciation is due to failure to notice spelling:

accidentally	ăk′-sĭ-dĕn′-tăl-ĭ	interesting	ĭn′-tẽr-ĕst-ĭng
admiralty	ăd′-mĭ-răl-tĭ	irrelevant	ĭ-rĕl′-ē-vănt
aeronaut	ā′-ẽr-ō-nôt	laborers	lā′-bẽr-ẽrz
attack	ă-tăk′	laundered	lôn′-dẽrd
attacked	ă-tăkt′	library	lī′-brā-rĭ
attacking	ă-tăk′-ing	maintenance	mān′-tē-năns
auxiliary	ôg-zĭl′-yȧ-rĭ	mediaeval	mē′-dĭ-ē′-văl
barbarous	bär′-bȧr-ŭs	mischievous	mĭs′-chĭ-vŭs
beneficent	bē-nĕf′-ĭ-sĕnt	particularly	pär-tĭk′-ū-lȧr-lĭ
candidate	kăn′-dĭ-dāt	pastoral	pȧs′-tor-al
Carolina	kăr-ō-lī′-nȧ	periodical	pē-rĭ-ŏd′-ĭ-kăl
casualties	kăzh′-ū-ăl-tĭz	phraseology	frā′-zē-ŏl′-ō-jĭ
column	kŏl′-ŭm	portentous	pōr-tĕn′-tŭs
curiosity	kū-rĭ-ŏs′-ĭ-tĭ	pretentious	prē-tĕn′-shŭs
despicable	dĕs′-pĭ-kȧ-b'l	quantity	kwŏn′-tĭ-tĭ
diphtheria	dĭf-thē′-rĭ-ȧ	realize	rē′-ăl-īz
drowned	dround	really	rē′-ăl-ĭ
environment	ĕn-vī′-rŭn-mĕnt	recognize	rĕk′-ŏg-nīz
farthest	fär′-thĕst	sacrilegious	săk′-rĭ-lē′-jŭs
February	fĕb′-ro͝o-ā-rĭ	statistics	stȧ-tĭs′-tĭks
further	fûr′-thẽr	stupendous	stū-pĕn′-dŭs
furthermore	fûr′-thẽr-mōr′	temperament	tĕm′-pẽr-ȧ-mĕnt
government	gŭv′-ẽrn-mĕnt	temperature	tĕm′-pẽr-ȧ-tu̲r
guardian	gär′-dĭ-ăn	tremendous	trē-mĕn′-dŭs
height	hīt	Westminster	wĕst′-mĭn′-stẽr

Words often accented incorrectly:

accent (verb)	ăk-sĕnt	adult	ă-dŭlt′
address	ă-drĕs′	allies	ă-līz′

*KEY TO SYMBOLS:

āle, prefâce, câre, ăm, finăl, ärm, sofȧ, talk; ēve, ẽvent, ĕnd, recẽnt, evẽr; īce, ĭll; cōld, ôbey, lôrd, ŏdd, cōntrol; fo͝od, fo͝ot; ūse, ŭnite, ûrn, ŭp, circŭs; this, those, natu̲re. For a description of the sounds of these symbols, see *Webster's Collegiate Dectionary.*

armistice	är′-mĭs-tĭs	increase (verb)	ĭn-krēs′
aspirant	ăs-pīr′-*ă*nt	indisputable	ĭn-dĭs′-pū-t*ă*-b'l
augment	ôg-mĕnt′	industries	ĭn′-dŭs-trĭz
bacillus	b*ă*-sĭl′-ŭs	inexplicable	ĭn-ĕks′-plĭ-k*ă*-b'l
conflict (verb)	kŏn-flĭkt′	influence	ĭn′-flo͞o-ĕns
contrary	kŏn′-trâ-rĭ	inquiry	ĭn-kwīr′-ĭ
discourse	dĭs-kōrs′	irremediable	ĭr-ē-mē′-dĭ-*ă*-b'l
entire	ĕn-tīr′	irreparable	ĭ-rĕp′-*ă*-r*ă*-b'l
European	ū′-rō-pē′-*ă*n	irrevocable	ĭ-rĕv′-ō-k*ă*-b'l
exigency	ĕk′-sĭ-jĕn-sĭ	obligatory	ŏb′-lĭ-g*ă*-tō-rĭ
expert (adj.)	ĕks-pûrt′	precedence	prē-sēd′-ĕns
exquisite	ĕks′-kwĭ-zĭt	protest (verb)	prō-tĕst′
finance	fĭ-năns′	research	rē-sûrch′
formidable	fôr′-mĭ-d*ă*-b'l	resources	rē-sōr′-sĕz
harass	hăr′-ăs	review	rē-vū′
hospitable	hŏs′-pĭ-t*ă*-b'l	romance	rō-măns′
idea	ī-dē′-*ă*	vagary	v*ă*-gā′-rĭ
impious	ĭm′-pĭ*ŭ*s	vehement	vē′-hē-mĕnt

Words in which mispronunciation is due to failure to make certain vowels obscure:

anarchist	ăn′-*ă*r-kĭst	residence	rĕz′-ĭ-dĕns
incident	ĭn′-sĭ-dĕnt	theater	thē′-*ă*-tēr
president	prĕz′-ĭ-dĕnt		

Words in which mispronunciation is due to flattening of long *e*:

adherence	ăd-hēr′-ĕns	era	ē′-r*ă*
clique	klēk	experience	ĕks-pē′-rĭ-ĕns
creek	krēk	inherent	ĭn-hēr′-ĕnt
eagle	ē′-g'l	league	lēg

Words in which mispronunciation is due to dropping of the *y* element of the vowel *u*:

accumulate	*ă*-kū′-mū-lāt	manufacturer	măn-ū-făk′-t*u̯*r-ēr
figure	fĭg′-ûr	stimulate	stĭm′-ū-lāt
inaugurate	ĭn-ô′-gū-rāt	Tuesday	tūz′-dā
introduce	ĭn-trō-dūs′	unscrupulous	ŭn-skro͞o-pū-l*ŭ*s

Words in which various vowels are often mispronounced:

alleged	*ă*-lĕjd′	ancient	ān′-shĕnt
alumnae	*à*-lŭm′-nē	apparatus	ăp′-*à*-rā′′-t*ŭ*s
alumni	*à*-lŭm′-nī	atrocity	*à*-trŏs′-ĭ-tĭ

autobiography	ô-tō-bī-ŏg′-rȧ-fĭ	gross	grōs
aviator	ā-vĭ-ā′tēr	guarantee	găr-ăn-tē′
bade	băd	heroine	hĕr′-ō-ĭn
biography	bī-ŏg′-rȧ-fĭ	homage	hŏm′-ăj
bouquet	bo͞o-kā′	homicide	hŏm′-ĭ-sīd
budget	bŭj′-ĕt	ignoramus	ĭg-nō-rā′-mŭs
bulk	bŭlk	immigrant	ĭm′-ĭ-grănt
buoyant	boi′-ănt	immigration	ĭm′-ĭ-grā′-shŭn
bureaucracy	bū-rō′-krȧ-sĭ	indirect	ĭn-dĭ-rĕkt′
catch	kăch	Italian	ĭ-tăl′-yăn
conspiracy	kŏn-spĭr′-ȧ-sĭ	livelong	lĭv′-lông
cowardice	kow′-ēr-dĭs	long-lived	lông′-līvd
data	dā′-tȧ	onerous	ŏn′-ēr-ŭs
direct	dĭ-rĕkt′	penalize	pē′nȧl-īze
emigrant	ĕm′-ĭ′grănt	predecessor	prĕd′-ē-cĕs′-ēr
emigration	ĕm′-ĭ-grā′-shŭn	presentation	prĕz′-en-tā′-shŭn
eminent	ĕm′-ĭ-nĕnt	program	prō′-grăm
employee	ĕm-ploĭ-ē′	roof	ro͞of
entertainment	ĕn′-tēr-tān′-mĕnt	root	ro͞ot
err	ûr	sacrifice (noun)	săk′-rĭ-fīs
experiment	ĕks-pĕr′-ĭ-mĕnt	sacrifice (verb)	săk′-rĭ-fīz
financial	fĭ-năn′-shăl	severity	sĕ-vĕr′-ĭ-tĭ
financier	fĭn-ăn-sēr′	sincerity	sĭn-sĕr′-ĭ-tĭ
flagrant	flā′-grănt	status	stā′-tŭs
genuine	jĕn′-ū-ĭn	unprecedented	ŭn-prĕs′-ē-dĕn-tĕd
granary	grăn′-ȧ-rĭ	various	vā′-rĭ-ŭs
gratis	grā′-tĭs	zo-ology	zō-ŏl′-ō-jĭ

Words in which various consonants are often mispronounced:

analogous	a-năl′-ō-gŭs	chicanery	shĭ-kān′-ēr-ĭ
analogy	a-năl′-ō-jĭ	etiquette	ĕt′-ĭ-kĕt
archipelago	är-kĭ-pĕl′-ă-gō	niche	nĭch
chic	shēk	quorum	kwō′-rŭm

Words in which mispronunciation is due to failure to keep certain consonants silent:

bas-relief	bä′-rē-lēf′	poignant	poin′-ănt
falcon	fô′-k′n	viscount	vī′-kount
forehead	fŏr′-ĕd		

ONE HUNDRED COMMON ERRORS IN SPEECH

Teachers often need a comprehensive list of common errors for practice in correction and for the definite teaching of sentence structure. The errors in the following list have been culled from observation. Most of them are sadly frequent in the average community. Certain errors are omitted from the list for the reason that they persist only sporadically beyond the grades. Many very gross errors, however, are included. Teachers need not give attention to errors seldom made by their own students. The list includes no points that can properly be regarded as mere niceties and minutiae of language. An accidental fact, significant in its bearing on needed emphasis, is that about one-third of the errors are connected with verbs, and that more than one-half of all errors are connected with verbs and pronouns. The shortness and simplicity of the sentences should make them serviceable for class drill. In every case the wrong form is given first and it is followed by the right form.

Errors in Agreement of Verb

1. There (is — are) said to be several causes for the improvement.
2. (Was — Were) you at church, John ?
3. Nearly every employee (belong — belongs) to the union.
4. He (don't — doesn't) intend to stay.
5. The news that he brought (are — is) surprising.
6. Neither of them (were — was) willing to help.
7. Either the pencil or the pen (are — is) satisfactory.
8. Mr. Brown as well as the other Democrats (were — was) elected.
9. The committee (were — was) not ready to report.
10. A number of people (was — were) in the room at the time.

Some Errors in Irregular Verbs

11. I saw the book (laying — lying) there.
12. The apples (laid — lay) ungathered.
13. She had (laid — lain) down to rest.
14. We had not yet (drank — drunk) our coffee.
15. She left the lamp (setting — sitting) on the table.
16. The fog had (raised — risen) a little.
17. He suddenly (begin — began) to run.
18. He (come — came) unexpectedly.
19. He (give — gave) the beggar a dime.

Errors in Tense

20. I had intended (to have called — to call) on her.
21. I (will accept — accept) your invitation with pleasure.
22. Bassanio chose the right casket and then (turns — turned) to secure the favor of Portia.
23. The lecturer said that oral English (was — is) more important than written.

Errors of Auxiliary

24. He (hadn't ought — ought not) to have acted so.
25. He never could (of — have) stood the trip.
26. I (will — shall) not be able to go.
27. (Will — Shall) we recite the lesson tomorrow?

Errors of Dangling Participle and Dangling Gerund

28. Climbing to the top of the hill, the city could be seen in the distance.
    Climbing to the top of the hill, we could see the city in the distance.
29. In talking with the manager, he informed me of his plans.
    In talking with the manager, I got information about his plans.

Errors in Mode

30. I wish I (was — were) able to go.
31. If I (was — were) in his place, I should work harder.
32. If he (were — was) present at the meeting, he ought to have reported what was said.

Errors in Case of Pronouns

33. (Whom — Who) do you think will win ?
34. The opportunity will come to (whomever — whoever) is ready to use it.
35. Was it (me — I) (us — we) (him — he) (her — she) (them — they) that Mr. Jones had in mind ?
36. There was much discussion about (whom — who) the writer really was.
37. The students elected John and (I — me).
38. (Who — Whom) did they choose ?
39. The manager has been kind to my sister and (I — me).
40. (Who — Whom) is your message for ?
41. Let's you and (I — me) work together.
42. (Who — Whom) do you believe to be most deserving ?
43. They want Mary and (I — me) to help.
44. I am taller than (her — she) (him — he) (them — they).
45. He is as accurate as (me — I) (her — she).
46. I was amazed at (him — his) speaking so rudely.

Errors in Pronoun Reference

47. She won't let her daughter go away to school because she isn't strong.
    She won't let her daughter, who isn't strong, go away to school.
48. He became popular, which he had much desired.
    He won popularity, which he had much desired.
49. It (meaning a text or writer) says that the President was elected by a large majority.

Our textbook says that the President was elected by a large majority.

Errors in Pronoun Number

50. Everybody did (their — his) best.
51. I don't like (these — this) kind of apples.

Errors in Plural of Nouns

52. One of her (brother-in-laws — brothers-in-law) was driving the car.
53. All the laboratories have splendid (equipments — equipment).

Error of the Possessive Case

54. Our school's success depends on us.
The success of our school depends on us.

Error in Noun Gender

55. Several women in that club are (alumni — alumnae) of Vassar.

Errors of Adjective for Adverb and Adverb for Adjective

56. It was (real — really or very) warm.
57. He (sure — surely) worked hard.
58. He spoke to me (very friendly — in a very friendly manner).
59. The skies looked (grimly — grim).

Other Errors in the Function of a Particular Word

60. (They — There) were thousands present.
61. I don't know (as — that) I can answer the question.
62. I can't do it (without — unless) you help me.
63. It seems (like — as if) he ought to have known better.
64. He is (kind of — rather) peculiar.

65. The reason he isn't here is (because — that) he is ill.
66. Unity is (when we hold — holding) to one subject.
67. I (suspicioned — suspected) him from that moment.
68. She slipped (due to — on account of) her weak ankle.
69. A report will be made (the same as — just as) in the past.

Errors of Double Negative

70. I (can't — can) hardly decide.
71. (Don't take — Take) but one glass.

Errors of Redundance

72. We ought to feel thankfulness and gratitude.
    We ought to feel thankfulness.
73. Mr. Jones, he deserves the credit.
    Mr. Jones deserves the credit.
74. This paper is (equally as — equally) good for the purpose.
75. I don't (remember of — remember) having seen him before.
76. Two articles in this newspaper (treat on — treat) the subject.
77. That was the time when I (met up — met) with him.

Errors of Omission

78. The high school will have a boys' and girls' basketball team.
    The high school will have a boys' and a girls' basketball team.
79. He is a Democrat; his best friends, Republicans.
    He is a Democrat; his best friends are Republicans.
80. I have in the past and shall contribute in the future to worthy causes.
    I have contributed in the past and shall contribute in the future to worthy causes.
81. She is well educated, so is qualified to judge.

She is well educated and so is qualified to judge.

82. When very ill, any excitement made her fever worse.
When she was very ill, any excitement made her fever worse.

Errors of Arrangement

83. He sent a harsh reply to the affectionate letter which his brother had written in a mood of irritation.
In a mood of irritation he sent a harsh reply to the affectionate letter which his brother had written.
84. (I and you and Miss Smith — You, Miss Smith, and I) will be added to that committee.
85. The aim of the society is mental, moral, and physical improvement.
The aim of the society is physical, mental, and moral improvement.
86. John, after he had read widely on the subject and had made an outline, began to write.
After John had read widely on the subject and had made an outline, he began to write.

Error from Failure to Subordinate

87. She plays well (and — although) she has taken music lessons only a short time.

Errors of Correlation

88. Neither the boys or the girls like John.
Neither the boys nor the girls like John.
89. He was fair both to my sister and me.
He was fair to both my sister and me.
90. I had rather come early (as — than) to stay late.
91. I had scarcely gone to sleep (than — when) she called me.
92. The story is such (that — as) would be handed down from father to son.

Errors in Lack of Parallelism

93. She is tall, fair, and has blue eyes.
    She is tall and fair and has blue eyes.
94. She told him not to mark her books and that he ought to take better care of them.
    She told him that he ought not to mark her books and that he ought to take better care of them.
95. He is a man of strong opinions but who is tolerant of new ideas.
    He is a man who has strong opinions but who is tolerant of new ideas.
96. Behind one door was a beautiful lady; the other concealed a fierce tiger.
    Behind one door was a beautiful lady; behind the other, a fierce tiger.

Errors of Inconsistency

97. My sister and (myself — I) were invited.
98. The style of Ruskin is superior to Carlyle.
    The style of Ruskin is superior to that of Carlyle.
99. As a thinker he is the most original of his contemporaries.
    As a thinker he is more original than his contemporaries.
100. Longfellow was more popular than (any — any other) poet of his day.

SPELLING LISTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL DRILL

The following spelling lists are intended for the use of teachers in the field. The compilation has been derived from frequent misspelling in thousands of themes by high school pupils. In assigning these lists teachers may either write the words on the blackboard or prepare and distribute mimeographed sheets for study by the pupils. It is to be

hoped that in some schools there will be little occasion for giving attention to the first eighty words. The arrangement of the three hundred words in groups of twenty may be a convenience in making spelling assignments.

1	2	3	4	5
all right	accept	advice	among	absence
believe	asked	advise	arouse	accidentally
business	beginning	almost	arranging	accommodate
doesn't	coming	born	buried	carrying
lead	cries	borne	entertain	definite
led	didn't	description	etc.	desirable
loose	disappoint	disappearance	every	exceedingly
lose	except	enough	forty	explain
quiet	haven't	February	immediately	explanation
quite	its	finally	losing	government
receive	it's	grammar	paid	grandeur
their	laid	lying	pleasant	height
there	perhaps	necessary	possession	interruption
to	separate	planning	principal	occasionally
too	speak	similar	principle	occurrence
truly	speech	studying	privilege	opinion
two	stopped	weather	shining	opportunity
until	surprise	whether	usually	pertaining
woman	writing	whose	view	ridiculous
women	written	yield	village	villain

6	7	8	9	10
acquaintance	accompanying	affect	advantageous	angel
athletics	attack	commission	besiege	angle
brilliant	balance	compelled	consent	changeable
carelessness	eighth	compels	concerned	conspicuous
committed	hurrying	decision	especially	column
communities	immensely	descendants	grievous	controlling
dealt	interesting	dissatisfied	humorous	controls
encouragement	lightning	effect	hurriedly	courageous
existence	loneliness	formally	injurious	guarantee
foretell	misspell	formerly	laborer	livelihood
heroes	mortgage	grateful	mischievous	medieval
maybe	nineteen	Great Britain	nervous	originally
occurred	ninth	intelligence	precede	physician
occurring	noticeable	leisure	probability	professor
occurs	peculiarities	mathematics	procedure	pursue
omitted	performance	omission	proceed	quantity
particularly	persistence	relief	seize	rhythm
perseverance	repetition	superintendent	succeed	shepherd
recommendation	replies	uncertainty	temporary	tragedy
resemblance	sincerely	weird	tremendous	welfare

11	12	13	14	15
accustomed	awkward	appropriate	apologize	acknowledgment
benefited	beneficial	Christian	apparently	analysis
completely	condemned	conscience	assistance	apparatus
debater	despicable	conscientious	barbarous	co-operation
disastrous	foreigner	conscious	curiosity	corporation
divine	manufacturer	embarrassment	deceased	correspondence
excelled	periodical	energetic	discipline	degradation
excels	politician	enthusiasm	diseased	exaggeration
group	portrayal	equipped	efficiency	fallacy
guard	recognize	fundamental	excellence	fascinate
inconvenience	regretting	harassed	familiarity	heroically
indispensable	respectfully	imagine	keenness	laboratory
inexhaustible	salary	permissible	pamphlet	loyalty
irresistible	shriek	prefers	parliamentary	parallel
marriage	stubbornness	preferred	pastime	postpone
outrageous	stretch	psychological	permanent	reference
monopoly	suppress	restaurant	pervading	referred
peaceable	temperature	temperament	prejudice	refers
representative	tyrannically	thoroughly	prevalent	statistics
schedule	undoubtedly	tranquillity	skillful	warrant

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. From the pronunciation list on pages 267–269 let some member of the Methods class select ten words that are most often mispronounced in your locality, explain to the class the character and if possible the cause of the current mispronunciation and secure from two or three members of the Methods class a flawless pronunciation of these words.
2. Let some member of the class prepare a business letter for a dictation exercise, place the letter on the board, assign it with explanation as to how copies coming in the next day shall be folded. The letter may be an order for books with money order inclosed. Then let the Methods class comment on the merits of the assignment.
3. A few "spelling cripples" are unable to spell because their weak eyesight has caused them to avoid looking closely at the succession of letters. What do you recommend in regard to such defectives?
4. Let each member of the Methods class select one type of

error from the sentences on pages 270–276 and teach the grammar necessary for understanding this error.

5. In order to show time economy in spelling let the Methods class be turned into a spelling class and write fifteen spelling demons from dictation. Pass the papers by the rotary system, correct them and make a report on each paper. Less than ten minutes should be needed.
6. Let some member of the class give the entire class a ten-minute drill on uses of *effect* and *affect*.
7. Why is it improper to regard penmanship as a responsibility of the English department ?
8. Let some member of the class prepare an original dialogue, place it on the board and assign it as a dictation exercise. Then let the Methods class comment on the suitability of the exercise.
9. Let some member of the Methods class bring paper of standard business size and of note size together with the different styles of envelopes and illustrate the way in which he would teach high school freshmen to fold letters.
10. What serious speech errors are especially common with people of some education in your locality ? Suggest how the schools may effectively direct attention to these errors.
11. Why should a teacher refrain from criticizing mistakes in English that are made outside of his own class room ?
12. Let some member of the Methods class give an illustrative presentation of the use of the apostrophe in contractions and possession. After the presentation let all members of the Methods class discuss possible ways of improving the presentation.

CHAPTER VI

VOCABULARY WORK AND TESTING

WORD STUDY

Vocabulary mastery is a phase of English that is connected with literature, written composition, and oral composition. It should not be neglected or slighted even though it is a rather vague task of indefinable magnitude.

121. **The placing of responsibility.** — English teachers, feeling the weight of their numerous responsibilities, are often tempted to slight vocabulary work. They are aware that, while the vocabulary of any pupil can be gauged with absolute accuracy, their own contribution to the sum total cannot be measured. Definite evidence has been presented to show that students entering college from small high schools are decidedly weaker in vocabulary than those from large high schools.[1] The limitations of English teachers in small high schools must be partly accountable. But the causes are complex. Rural life is far less favorable to wide vocabulary than is urban life. The probability is that home environment, always an influential factor in vocabulary, has been more stimulating in the case of children from the cities. Furthermore, foreign languages are either not taught at all or taught very poorly in the small high schools.

[1] J. H. McKee, "Where They Come From and What They Do," *English Journal*, XV, 425–429.

Consequently, many students from village high schools lack the large contribution to the English vocabulary which is made by good teaching of French or Spanish or Latin. Since the decrease in the study of German, the one language which does very little for English vocabulary, and the emphasis on romance languages, the disparity in vocabulary between pupils who have had foreign language training and those who have not had such training tends to become even more marked. The English teacher who works under adverse conditions cannot possibly bring the students' vocabulary attainments up to any satisfactory status. To attempt to do so would mean the neglect of more pressing obligations. We accordingly face the question, Just what must we try to accomplish ?

122. **Interest in words.** — In the beginning we are forced to talk about creating interest. Such talk must risk the unpleasant effect of seeming to be an evasion. But we can surely testify from experience that happy and opportune suggestions may at times result in a far more extensive achievement on the part of our brilliant students than we had any right to require or expect. Some understanding of word history may awaken promising students to an appreciation of the rich glowing capacities of language. It is worth while for the teacher to show that all abstract words are metaphorical in essence, that such expressions as "*frigid* manner," "*ardent* enthusiasm," "*bitter* disappointment," are sensation words of temperature or taste. "Anthology," apparently meaning a collection of poems, has a new charm for the student who knows that it means a collection of flowers. The average person can hardly distinguish between

"superciliousness," and "arrogance." The original meaning of "superciliousness," "a lifting of the eyebrows," shades the emphasis toward manner. Students have gained something if they perceive that the metaphorical origin of an abstract word is never quite lost; that every word has a chameleon quality, taking its coloring from the various felicitous uses to which it has been put, but never losing altogether its original shade. The word, "egregious," for instance, has turned a somersault and has actually reversed itself, but it has a humorous aroma from the first meaning. Once it meant the best, the best sheep from the entire flock; now it means the worst, with an ironical ring. Attention to such illustrative words should develop the thought that many a word has not only a bare general meaning or denotation but also a cluster of suggestions, which make up the connotation. Students may be interested in knowing that to carry the idea of denotation and connotation, terms have also been imported from science, "kinetic value" and "potential value."

From this basic development we proceed to show that many synonyms, such as "motherly" and "maternal," differ in connotation rather than in denotation. We should call attention to the vast wealth of the English language in close synonyms. A way of emphasizing the idea is for the teacher to give out the first member and call for volunteers to give the second member of such word pairs as these: *green, verdant; heavenly, celestial; tasteless, insipid; warning, premonition; rashness, temerity; friendly, amicable; warring, belligerent; beliefs, tenets.* Through such matching the students note that, although the structure of our language is Germanic, almost half of our vocabulary is Latin and

that synonyms which are nearly identical have always a slight shade of difference.

Such discussions of imagery, connotation, and equivalences are designed to create in our students a craving for word knowledge. As to the extent of these discussions we must always be guided by the class reaction. Some English classes, but not all, will have an eager interest in the valuation which great artists attach to the rightly chosen word. Barrie's child genius, "Sentimental Tommy," lost the prize in the essay contest because he preferred to give the whole hour to finding an exact descriptive adjective. The French stylist, Flaubert, said that a single epithet often cost him ten hours of labor. Max Beerbohm, whose own use of words is always delightful, has paid this charming tribute[2] to Thackeray's magical power to summon fitting words:

> He blew on his pipe and words came tripping round him, like children, like pretty little children who are perfectly drilled for the dance, or came, did he will it, treading in their precedence, like kings, gloomily.

Tennyson recognized the immortality of a noble phrase when he spoke of the

> jewels five words long
> That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
> Sparkle forever.

But if our pupils should be indifferent to artistic enthusiasm for novel and exquisite word combinations, they can still always be led to appreciate the commonplace everyday universal values of learning words. We must not fail to

[2] Max Beerbohm, "King George the Fourth," *The Works of Max Beerbohm* (London: John Lane, 1896), p. 61.

show them that complex thought processes are dependent on vocabulary, that meagre diction is usually proof of meagre intelligence, and that there is an undeniable ratio between word mastery and vigor of intellectual life. Our students can readily see that ignorance of words is a serious impediment in rapid reading and in successful study. Through our references to their written and oral compositions they will recall how often they have been in a distressing quandary from sheer lack of ability to rephrase an expression. They must comprehend the fact that in all writing and speaking there is a constant need of variant statements so that ideas may be clear and never monotonous, impressive and never wearisome.

If the practical aspects of word uses receive attention in the teaching of prose literature, aesthetic satisfaction will not be impaired, but will be heightened. Students will have larger understanding and enjoyment of Irving's *Westminster Abbey* if they observe how the paragraph construction is directly dependent on the variety of words that contribute to a single thought. For instance, through the class development they should find in the first paragraph these numerous words blending to give the tone of sadness: "sober"; "melancholy"; "autumn"; "shadows"; "gloom"; "decline"; "mournful"; "old pile"; "antiquity." In the second paragraph they should find these words used to emphasize darkness: "vaulted"; "subterranean"; "dimly lighted"; "dark"; "black"; "shadowy"; "specter." In the paragraph beginning, "I pursued my walk," they should find these expressions suggestive of great size: "magnitude"; "gigantic"; "amazing height"; "shrunk into insignificance"; "spacious-

Pictures for Irving's Westminster Abbey. Exterior, old cloisters, Poets' Corner, Statesmen's Corner, great cloisters, coronation chair, chapter house, tomb of Queen Elizabeth, ceiling of Henry VII's chapel, shrine of the Confessor

ness." Through such a study they discover that as a painter must have a thousand colors and shades, the prose writer must have at his command an illimitable range of words that carry minute and subtle distinctions.

XXX. WAYS OF TEACHING WORDS

The words selected for study should be non-technical words of sufficient difficulty. As a rule about eight or ten words should be assigned for a lesson. After fifty or a hundred have been covered the review may be a multiple choice test.

123. **Types of words.** — In selecting words for thorough concentrated study we must take into account the difference between the vocabulary problem for elementary teaching and for high school teaching. The elementary teacher is concerned chiefly with securing understanding of words that are frequent in the reading material of the grades. For this purpose highly scientific classification has been worked out. By the time the eighth or the ninth grade has been reached, words needed for easy reading have been covered. For high school purposes the words should be those that will require study from all of our pupils and at the same time those that are needed in the writing and speaking of a liberally educated person. Typical words of the right kind are found in any issue of a current periodical: such words as *chicanery, fundamentalism, antithesis, corroborate, hypothesis,* words which in the present state of public education force most students to use the dictionary. If we assign words that mean work for only two-thirds of a class, we fail to require enough exertion from our stronger students. We must make the load heavy enough for the bright

and not too heavy for the backward pupils. In connection with word lists there is also another provision that must never be forgotten. Words that are technical cannot be universally serviceable. A high school teacher in the Middle West recently based the vocabulary study of a ninth grade class reading *Treasure Island* mainly on nautical terms. Her students, living inland, could have no future use for such terms and they could have understood the story without this peculiar emphasis. Many words in the same book that were unfamiliar to the pupils and that might have been useful in social relations received no consideration whatsoever.

124. **Some teaching plans.** — The words assigned may be derived from the prose literature studied or from a current periodical or they may even be a compilation which the teacher has made from various newspapers and periodicals. There are possibly some definite objections to a compilation which does not show context. Such a compilation can be satisfactory only if the teacher has extensive knowledge and in class work very liberally illustrates the proper uses of the word. A good list so handled sometimes results in remarkable vocabulary growth on the part of many students. Bright students have been known to request additional and similar lists for individual study and they have mastered such lists without the incentive of credit. Probably the average teacher could accomplish more through the definite plan that has been worked out by one highly successful teacher. This teacher has selected fifty suitable words from each novel which her course emphasizes. She has prepared mimeographed sheets of words with definitions and with page citations so that context can be found. For each word

she herself furnishes both a definition and an illustrative use. Here is a sample:

affluent (ad-to, fluere-flow) abounding in wealth
Although he had never been in affluent circumstances, he had not suffered want.

In tests she accepts only her own definition or one superior to her own and only her own illustration or one that to an equal degree throws direct light on the meaning of the word. She leaves the learning of derivation to the option of the student. Except for review purposes she does not give an entire class period to vocabulary but assigns eight or ten words a day in connection with other work. During ten or fifteen minutes she conducts a written test on these words. The pupils pass the papers by the rotary system, correct them, and report results.

Although the method just described is sure and safe, good teaching of words may be done without the prepared sheets. If students find their definitions from the dictionary, it must be understood that only a typical and serviceable definition will be accepted, that a single close synonym will be held satisfactory, and that the definition must be the same part of speech as the word to be defined. Objection may be raised by some authorities to acceptance of a synonym, which never of course is a true definition. The answer is that the whole problem should be regarded from the standpoint of practical teaching efficiency. It is doubtful whether results will justify prolonged class attention to multitudinous finer distinctions. In many cases where students are required to learn the general meaning and use, they will

master those distinctions for themselves. Furthermore, the allowance of a synonym is necessary if we handle the work through the short written test with pupil correction. The teacher must be so well informed that he can rule instantly as to whether a synonym is close enough. The requirement concerning the part of speech used in the definition is one that pupils easily learn to meet if on the first few tests their papers are rigidly marked down for violations. The definition of "superfluities" must not be, "to have more than enough," but it should be "over-abundance."

Another method that results in rapid vocabulary accretions consists in special work on prefixes and cognates. When the English course is more highly standardized, prominent word roots will undoubtedly be selected for special study in each grade. Is it not obvious economy for the pupil to learn in immediate connection the meaning and use of *subvert, revert, perversity, versatile* and allied words? Will not his interest be quickened if he studies simultaneously *animation, magnanimity, unanimity, pusillanimity*? At the present time it may not be practicable to carry on such work very extensively. But every teacher should give some attention to derivations and cognates.

There is also a helpful incidental method of word study that is largely optional with the students. They are requested to keep lists of words that have been unknown to them and that they are acquiring in various ways. Purely technical words should not be included. The listing should be accompanied by the sources from which the words were obtained. The listing presupposes that the student is able to prove understanding of each word. An advantage of

the plan is that the teacher is kept in touch with vocabulary gains made through citizenship, history, and science courses.

XXXI. TESTING

The justification for including in the same chapter vocabulary work and testing is that they have each application to two or three major divisions of English study. We have noticed that vocabulary work has an intimate connection with literature and with composition. We shall find that testing is essential both in the teaching of literature and in training for accuracy. All or nearly all English tests should be purely objective.

125. **Purposes of tests.** — The increasing use of the new-type examination [3] is directing the attention of teachers to the purposes of tests. Probably too many people think of tests as chiefly designed to aid in the troublesome task of determining grades. Good tests do indeed contribute to grading which is recognized as fair. Many a pupil who fails to see that his oral answers are mere bluffing finds the evidence of a written test convincing. Other purposes, however, may be rated as more important. Not the least of these is motivation. Application, attention and retention are vastly greater if careful tests are given with sufficient frequency. The ability to use written tests as a legitimate incentive is a vital element in the technique of teaching large classes. Another purpose of tests is the instruction that may be imparted through them. This end can be obtained only through proper emphasis of the correct answers when papers are returned. A final value which deserves more general appreciation is the aid of test results in subsequent teaching.

126. **The objective test.** — Progressive English teachers, who must usually give numerous tests, are finding the new-

[3] See G. M. Ruch, *The Improvement of the Written Examination* (New York: Scott Foresman and Company, 1924).

type examination an inestimable boon. It is easy to score and makes feasible pupil correction either in class or outside of class. Being absolutely objective, it has unique importance for English teachers because their judgment of both oral and written compositions is inherently and inevitably subjective and conduces to prepossessions. The stubborn strength of prepossessions is not easily exaggerated. A high school teacher who recently entered on a year of university graduate study informed her friends of her intention to work furiously for about two months so that she might loaf for the rest of the year with the pleasant assurance of high scholastic rating. Prepossessions are seldom shaken by the essay type of examination, but if they are erroneous, they are demolished by the disclosures of the objective test.

In making objective test questions some precautions are needed. For the most significant results each question should be one that some members of the class, but not all, can answer correctly. If true-false questions are used, the statements should be positively and undoubtedly true or positively and undoubtedly false and should not by their very nature afford any clue. These questions on the *Odyssey* and *Julius Caesar* respectively meet the requirements:

	True	False
Mark true or false:		
All the men on whom the lot fell to go to Circe's palace were transformed into animals.	____	____
Cinna, the poet, who was killed by the angry mob, was one of the conspirators.	____	____

Whether the questions are true-false, completion, multiple choice, or matching, ambiguities must be avoided. A question is not objective unless any answer that may be given is either unmistakably right or unmistakably wrong.

Multiple choice tests seem to be especially satisfactory for checking on home reading and for vocabulary review. In some large schools five or six English teachers parcel out among themselves twelve or fifteen novels and each teacher works out extensive multiple choice tests on two or three books. Teachers then interchange tests according to their needs and thus economize time and energy. Since the pupils answer the tests by rapid checking and are not allowed to retain copies, the same test can be used a considerable number of times with relative safety. When the multiple choice test is used for vocabulary review, at least fifty words should be included. It is a good thing to introduce some common confusions in order to penalize guessing. The student is expected to indicate the correct choice, as in these illustrations:

fortuitous:	*accidental*	fortunate	systematic	clever	prepared
cloy:	*to disgust*	to provoke	to heal	to comfort	to honor
virulence:	illness	weakness	manliness	*venom*	vitality
imminent:	prominent	*threatening*	lowly	deserving	distinguished
ingenuous:	*frank*	skillful	shrewd	learned	generous

Any one can see that the value of the test as a measurement depends on the selection of plausible and incorrect alternative choices.

127. **Character of literature questions.** — As a rule literature questions should measure comprehension of literature and familiarity with it. Relatively few questions should be concerned with the factual background or literary history.

There are two objections to appreciation questions. One is that they are not very reliable. The other is that appreciation is reduced even by the prospect of an attempt to measure it. For all practical purposes, however, comprehension tests are sufficient. Questions should not be dependent merely on verbal memory but rather on understanding and judgment. The point may be illustrated through this completion question on *Julius Caesar:*

> These words were spoken to ——— by ———:
> "Your voice shall be as strong as any man's
> In the disposing of new dignities."

Interpretation of character is involved in the answer. Mark Antony is the man who must be won at any cost and Cassius alone would have the practical and cynical view of human nature involved in holding out the inducement.

Such questions as we have been considering take very little time for writing or for grading and are purely objective. The advantage of brevity in the answers is undeniable. Objectivity, however, is the more important matter. Some desirable literature questions can hardly be framed in a satisfactory way for one-word answers. Fortunately, all desirable literature questions can be so framed that they are objective. Such questions as these on *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* illustrate the fact:

Give four decisions in regard to which Brutus and Cassius had opposite opinions and in which Brutus' wishes controlled the course taken.

With what theme does the longest piece of sustained irony in *Macbeth* deal ?

Why does Malcolm represent himself to Macduff as a villain ?

Although these questions cannot have single word answers, there is no danger whatever that grading might be colored by the teacher's opinion of the writer. As far as content is concerned, there is only one correct way to answer each of these questions. They are therefore infinitely preferable to such an old-fashioned meaningless question as, "Discuss the relation of Malcolm to Macduff."

Let us hope that literature tests may not be standardized. It is not necessary that all classes and all pupils should master selected identical points in a novel or a play. There is no objection to standardized tests on uses of the right pronoun form or on punctuation because everybody should have the same information concerning such matters. But the influence of standardized tests on the teaching of literature is at least in part unfortunate. Teachers bend their emphasis in the direction of those definite matters about which it is easiest to ask questions. How dare a literature teacher take time to conceive and to illuminate through personal experiences the feeling of a certain character in a play when a coming test cannot measure the depth of the pupils' sympathy? Literature tests given by an outside authority mean a cramming to prepare for fact questions involving memory rather than judgment.

128. **Language tests.** — On the other hand, standardized tests on language information and language use should have a large place in our English teaching. Efficient teachers are sure to profit by measurement of instruction in essentials. It is a singular fact that in many great cities there is the widest variation in the degree of accuracy required for promotion under different teachers of the same grade.

A ninth grade pupil whose form, spelling and punctuation are unsatisfactory could be sure of promotion under one teacher and equally sure of retardation under another. Pupils very quickly discover these differences in requirements and if they are deficient, sometimes choose loose teachers. It would be the simplest thing in the world for any high school to set aside some period in which all ninth or all tenth grade pupils would take uniform language tests.[4] Thus in so far as inaccuracy is the cause of retardation, the minimum standard would be applied with fairness and consistency. Attention to the matter is the more urgent because intelligent teachers generally regard inaccuracy as an especially proper and just cause for retardation.

Language tests have great value as a means of instruction. Questions in these tests must never touch matters on which authorities are divided. As the papers are corrected in class, ample time must be allowed for discussion and clear explanation of the correct usage. A sample test on punctuation is here provided in order to illustrate various features of the new-type objective examination. The test covers twenty points and nineteen different principles of punctuation. The correct answers, which are given immediately after the test, can be written in less than two minutes.

Sample Punctuation Test

Quotation marks and underlining are not to be given as answers in this test. In answering do not spell names of marks but make marks needed.

[4] For dictation tests see pages 300–306.

1. What two punctuation marks most frequently come after "Yes" and "No" ?
2. What mark precedes "consequently" when "consequently" is the beginning, not of a sentence, but of a clause ?
3. Make in their correct sequence the first two marks needed in the sentence:

   Please send the following books two copies of *Youth* one copy of *The Cathedral* three copies of *The Undying Fire.*
4. If one introduces into a composition a long quotation of three paragraphs, in how many different places will quotation marks appear ?
5. What two marks are allowable immediately after the salutation in a letter ?
6. I wish to write the sentence, He replied, "I saw her" If quotation marks apply only to "I saw her," should the period closing the sentence come *before* or *after* the closing quotation marks ?
7. Make in their correct sequence all marks not supplied and needed in the sentence:

   Brownings distinguishing characteristic is force or energy Tennysons harmony or artistic finish.
8. In the sentence, "Mrs. Johnson, the secretary, was late," what term describing a grammatical relation explains the necessity for commas ?
9. If one concludes a sentence with a four-line quoted stanza, what two marks might precede the stanza ?
10. Are there some cases where a comma may immediately follow a question mark ?
11. Make in their correct sequence the first two marks needed in the sentence:

    "Good heavens" he exclaimed
12. In the sentence, "My father, who was ill, could not go," what word, describing the clause, "who was ill," explains the necessity for commas ?

ANSWERS

1. . ,	7. ' ; ' ,
2. ;	8. Appositive
3. : ;	9. : ,
4. Four	10. No
5. : ,	11. ! .
6. Before	12. Non-restrictive

In connection with the answers we should observe that in three questions, 3, 7, and 11, the order in the key is essential, that in other questions any order is satisfactory provided the marks are right. With attention to this one point any moderately intelligent pupil could correct all the papers.

After pupils have seen the results of a test on punctuation or vocabulary, we may put this question to a class:

> Some of those who made more than 85 per cent (or 90 per cent or any other point) on this test were probably successful not because of previous knowledge or natural brilliance, but because of hard digging. If you are in the class that I am describing, won't you tell the rest of us about your methods of working?

Students who tremble at the thought of appearing egotistical to their classmates are willing to respond to such a question as this because of the modesty and humility that their response proves. We are likely to get some talks that will have an exceedingly salutary effect on less energetic students.

IN THIS chapter we have considered vocabulary work and testing in general. Vocabulary work must be handled largely through the written test. The educational value of improved testing cannot be overrated. Through better testing we teach only what our students need and thus econo-

mize time. In the next few years improved testing is likely to mean revolutionary changes in our language teaching.

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE DICTATION TESTS

Teachers feel the need of measuring high school students on general accuracy. It is seldom practicable to keep a relative rating of students on a large number of separate points. The dictation tests which follow combine the measurement of many items such as paragraph division, sentence division, syntactical correctness, punctuation, capitalization, use of the apostrophe, and spelling. In one school these tests have been given eight times a year for six years. A card index record shows the exact number of mistakes made by each individual of the thousands who have taken such tests. In the pages that follow three such tests are given for several purposes. They may be used by teachers in the field to determine the status of high school pupils on general accuracy. They may be used by the Methods class or by teachers in the field as samples by which to make similar tests. The tests are purely objective and impersonal. If directions are followed, the count on any given paper will be the same no matter what teacher may grade the papers.

The seventy-five words the spelling of which constitutes the final question of each test ought to be words that do not occur elsewhere in the particular test given. Let the students understand some weeks before they take the test that they can avoid errors on the last question if only they make a sufficiently careful review of a definite list of one hundred words or a definite list of two hundred words. The test is

based on the supposition that the students have been previously mastering a list of frequently used and frequently misspelled words.

Do not write the test on a blackboard but dictate everything. Read connected discourse, such as a sentence, or a letter or a dialogue twice, the first time that the students may grasp the general thought, the second time that they may write. In deciding how many words to give between pauses, take into consideration the difficulty of the material and the capacity of the students to retain phrases. Do not repeat on request. After giving a dialogue or a letter, it may be best to read rapidly a third time for comparison. In dictating lists of expressions, spelling lists or lists involving the apostrophe, read only once but explain that you will repeat on the condition that a request comes before you have given out the word or expression immediately following. In dictating sentences that involve choice between alternatives or involve supplying of forms to fill blanks, it is necessary to dictate punctuation marks. In the case of consecutive sentences that involve supplying of forms to fill numbered blanks, dictate all sentences with the numbered blanks before giving any of the numbered material from which the forms are to be obtained. Allow a minute or two minutes for filling in all needed forms.

In grading the papers, count any misspelling wherever it occurs one point. Count every wrong sentence division one error. Count each failure to use a needed punctuation mark or each incorrectly used punctuation mark one error except in cases where in immediate connection the same fault involves the same principle. For instance, the failure to use

either or both of the two commas needed to set off a non-restrictive relative clause should count not as two errors but as one. Count each failure to use a needed apostrophe or each wrong use of an apostrophe one error. Count each improper indentation or each lack of needed indentation one error. Count a wrong pronoun form one error. Count each attempt to make correction where a correction is not needed one error. Count an incorrect verb form two errors. Do not count as an error any point on which standard usage is divided. After marking all errors add for a numerical total.

DICTATION TESTS ON MINIMUM ESSENTIALS

TEST I

(1)

"Statistics show," said the lawyer with a sigh, "that the chain store movement is continuing with accelerated speed, is acquiring an appalling monopoly, is radically modifying economic conditions, and is entailing disastrous losses and innumerable casualties of independent business."

"Your despair is hardly warranted," replied the merchant, "for at the present time chain store managers do not show enough ingenuity, efficiency, or understanding of local idiosyncrasies to compete with an energetic, well equipped, local merchant."

(2)

the two witnesses' discrepancies	that treasurer's inefficiency
many gardeners' vegetables	her mother's acquaintances
that attorney's guarantee	various associates' opinions
many acrobats' performances	the two leaders' dissensions
three weeks' salary	that statesman's memoirs
that adversary's animosity	various students' schedules

(3)

In these sentences choose between alternatives and correct errors without making unnecessary changes:

She asked me whom I was looking for and she was apparently surprised that I had not heard about (his, him) going to Europe.

Neither of the players (was, were) able to guess whom the coach had in mind or whom he intended should catch the ball.

(4)

Write these sentences, leaving numbered blanks for the verb forms to be supplied later:

In the football game yesterday the half-back ..(1).. for the ball; when he had ..(2).. it, he ..(3).. himself free from his assailants and ..(4).. to make a touchdown; but he had hardly ..(5).. ten yards when he was ..(6).. down; being stunned, he ..(7).. unconscious for a short time until his friends ..(8).. help.

Two hours ago when the wind ..(9).. and the mist ..(10).. to clear, the ship ..(11).. out on a long cruise.

After I had ..(12).. my parcels in a safe place, I had ..(13).. down at the counter and had ..(14).. a sandwich and had ..(15).. a glass of milk.

1. Form of *spring*.
2. Form of *get*.
3. Form of *swing*.
4. Form of *strive*.
5. Form of *go*.
6. Form of *drag*.
7. Form of *lie* or *lay*.
8. Form of *give*.
9. Form of *rise* or *raise*.
10. Form of *begin*.
11. Form of *sit* or *set*.
12. Form of *lie* or *lay*.
13. Form of *sit* or *set*.
14. Form of *eat*.
15. Form of *drink*.

(5)

Spelling of 75 words out of a previously studied and definitely assigned list of 100 words or out of a previously studied and definitely assigned list of 200 words.

TEST II

(1)

234 East Ninth Street, St. Louis, Missouri,
February 8, 193 .

Mr. John Henderson
567 Commercial Street
New York City

My dear Mr. Henderson:

In answer to your inquiries I am glad to go on record as an enthusiastic advocate of government ownership and to state that I have observed some conspicuously successful experiments in municipally owned street railways and electricity. I am familiar with the reports indicating that certain cities are losing money through industrial enterprises. But these reports appear to be a part of the subtle and insidious propaganda systematically carried on by privileged interests. Corporations are naturally reluctant to relinquish the prodigious power inherent in the monopolistic control of utilities. I have considerable curiosity as to the results of your questionnaire.

Very truly yours,
John Smith.

(2)

several doctors' prescriptions
many people's prejudices
a lady's portrait
Christians' consciences
a student's synopsis
many predecessors' deficiencies
children's environment
many tourists' automobiles
women's activities
that family's aggressiveness

(3)

In these sentences choose between alternatives and correct errors without making unnecessary changes:

Since it was (she, her) who he was depending on, she ought not to have left without him knowing why she was leaving.

Although every one of her grievances against (we, us) girls are unreasonable, she is the sort of woman (who, whom) I am afraid will never again be friendly to you or I.

(4)

Write these sentences, leaving numbered blanks for the verb forms to be supplied later:

After he had ..(1).. far, he had ..(2).. a tire and had ..(3).. out of gasoline; he had ..(4).. the restaurant sign, had ..(5).. in, and had ..(6).. down with his friends while they ..(7).. a lunch.

In the test yesterday she ..(8).. near me; her book which she had ..(9).. in her lap ..(10).. open; when Professor Jones ..(11).. to look at her suspiciously, she ..(12).. to conceal the notes which were ..(13).. on a sheet ..(14).. under her examination paper.

1. Form of *drive*.
2. Form of *burst*.
3. Form of *run*.
4. Form of *see*.
5. Form of *come*.
6. Form of *sit* or *set*.
7. Form of *eat*.
8. Form of *sit* or *set*.
9. Form of *lie* or *lay*.
10. Form of *lie* or *lay*.
11. Form of *begin*.
12. Form of *strive*.
13. Form of *write*.
14. Form of *lie* or *lay*.

(5)

Spelling of 75 words out of a previously studied and definitely assigned list of 100 words or out of a previously studied and definitely assigned list of 200 words.

TEST III

(1)

"Our immigration law based on racial quota is having a phenomenal effect, making us a homogeneous people," remarked Professor Jones in an extremely complacent tone.

"Your view is probably right," replied his son with apparent acquiescence. "But, Father, enforcement of the law is by no means efficient, and an immense horde of foreigners surreptitiously enter by way of Cuba and Mexico. Neither they nor their numerous progeny will ever be assimilated."

"You are undoubtedly exaggerating the extent of illicit immigration," was the rejoinder of Professor Jones. "You forget that our coast line is vigilantly guarded by diligent officials and that only the most reckless foreigners would expose themselves to the imminent risk of seizure."

(2)

a freshman's knowledge
those poets' contemporaries
Keats' latest biographer
a missionary's generosity
those representatives' credentials
that reporter's perseverance
various patients' symptoms
an old soldier's reminiscences
a Scotchman's stubbornness
these aristocrats' ancestors

(3)

In these sentences choose between alternatives and correct errors without making unnecessary changes:

Every one of the sophomores were eager to condemn (whoever, whomever) stole the banner and were indignant on account of me suspecting them.

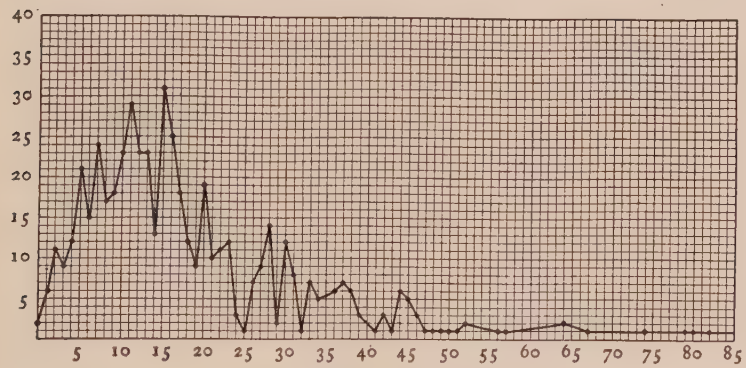
Neither the Latin teacher nor the high school principal, whom

I believe to be capable of judging, consider that Grace is as studious and as conscientious as my sister and (I, me).

(4)

Write these sentences, leaving numbered blanks for the verb forms to be supplied later:

When she ..(1).. to the Ladies' Aid Society last Wednesday, she ..(2).. in a conspicuous rocking-chair, ..(3).. some mate-



GRAPH SHOWING RESULTS OF TEST III

The test was taken simultaneously by 520 entering college freshmen. Figures on the margin indicate the number of pupils. Those on the base line indicate the number of errors.

rials that ..(4).. ready on the table, and then ..(5).. to sew energetically and to gossip at the same time.

When I glanced at the clock ..(6).. on the shelf, I was amazed because the dough, which had been ..(7).. by the cook in a flat pan and had been ..(8).. by her close to the oven fire, had ..(9).. so rapidly.

1. Form of *come*.
2. Form of *sit* or *set*.
3. Form of *take*.
4. Form of *lie* or *lay*.
5. Form of *begin*.
6. Form of *sit* or *set*.
7. Form of *lie* or *lay*.
8. Form of *sit* or *set*.
9. Form of *rise* or *raise*.

(5)

Spelling of 75 words out of a previously studied and definitely assigned list of 100 words or out of a previously studied and definitely assigned list of 200 words.

ILLUSTRATION OF TEST ON HOME READING

The following test on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* illustrates the most satisfactory method of checking on home reading. If students are not allowed to mark the mimeographed sheets containing the test, the same sheets may be used with several classes. In some schools a teacher makes a close study of a particular book, works out five sets of ten questions each, and exchanges sets for sets made by other teachers on other books. The answers should be given in numerical form here shown. Of course no student must be permitted to keep a copy of the questions.

I. The fact that Tom had disobediently gone in swimming was betrayed by
   1. damp shirt 2. a black thread 3. his tanned neck 4. a faded shirt

II. In church Tom provided diversion by taking from a box
   1. a beetle 2. a wasp 3. a firecracker 4. a dead mouse

III. When in the graveyard Tom and Huck saw
   1. a murder 2. a burial 3. a ghost-like figure 4. a woman wearing a crepe veil

IV. When the boys who had run away returned, they were first seen
   1. at Becky Thatcher's 2. at church 3. at school 4. at Aunt Polly's

V. Aunt Polly's cat raced frantically because of
1. a can tied to her tail 2. a dog 3. some stones hurled 4. a liquid

VI. The revenge taken on the teacher on examination day was carried out by the aid of
1. a barber's son 2. a locksmith's son 3. a sign-painter's son 4. a carpenter's son

VII. When Injun Joe and his companion found the treasure, the boys were watching from
1. a second story 2. behind a lumber pile 3. behind a tree trunk 4. a cellar

VIII. The conversation about the reasons for attacking the Widow Douglas was overheard by
1. Joe Harper 2. a detective 3. Tom 4. Huck

IX. The person who was the immediate cause of the death of Injun Joe was
1. Widow Douglas 2. Tom 3. Becky Thatcher's father 4. Muff Potter

X. The length of time that Becky was in the cave was about
1. twenty-four hours 2. a week 3. ten days 4. three days

Answers

I.	2	VI.	3
II.	1	VII	1
III.	1	VIII.	4
IV.	2	IX.	3
V.	4	X.	4

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Let three or four members of the Methods class interview several people who have an extensive vocabulary. Find out and report back to the class how they acquired their knowledge and use of words.

2. Let each member of the Methods class make a ten-word multiple choice vocabulary test.
3. Let each member of the Methods class prepare model definitions with illustrative uses (similar to the sample on page 288) of these words:

asperity; ephemeral; innate; cogent; obsequiousness

4. Let the Methods class make an objective punctuation test involving at least five principles not included in the test on page 296.
5. Let the Methods class make a ten-question short answer objective test on one of the classics that have been reviewed in preparation for high school teaching.
6. Let the Methods class make a completion test on case form for pronouns.

CHAPTER VII

USEFUL HELPS AND MATERIALS

THE LIBRARY

A dominant aim of good English teaching is to whet the appetite for reading and to develop the reading habit. For the attainment of this aim an attractive library is indispensable. The library should afford a varied supply of captivating books, basic reference material, and popular periodicals.

129. **The need of a library.** — English teachers are sometimes inclined to contrast enviously the liberal equipment provided for science teaching and even that provided for physical education with the meagre allowance for aids to English. They are undeniably justified in believing the library to be not less important than either the laboratory or the gymnasium. The most dynamic class room presentation suffers a serious handicap unless at least a minimum library is available. A library is the only means of teaching that can be called both cheap and good. Unhappily, the development of libraries has not kept pace with the rapid multiplication of high schools but has lagged far behind. Great numbers of consolidated high schools have been established even in remote rural districts; too many of them are almost destitute of books suitable for general reading. In such localities the English teacher has a chance to do pioneer work. If he uses patience, tact, and diplomacy, he may

win the support of principal or superintendent or school board in efforts to make the library more nearly adequate. In some high schools community opinion has given enthusiastic approval to a small rental charge that is used in obtaining additional books. Whenever there is a public library in a small town, it should, as it usually does, serve the chief needs of the high school. Ideal results are attained if there is a co-operative and friendly relation between the English teachers and the library staff. Librarians are often willing to make purchases in accordance with class room needs. When a teacher has a passionate desire to build up a library, ways and means can frequently be found.

130. **General reading material.** — The library ought first of all to include much standard fiction. It should have five or six copies of such books as *Tom Sawyer, The Call of the Wild, The Spy, Kidnapped, Seventeen, Ramona, Little Women, Ben Hur, The Three Musketeers* and others that are palatable to immature pupils.[1] For students who have a voracious reading appetite there should be single copies of novels representing fifty or sixty novelists. Collections of short stories are not less essential than novels. When they are of high quality, they have the value of educating taste. They serve to train judgment, they have the strongest interest for everybody, and they consume very little time in proportion to their usefulness in giving standards of comparison. Furthermore, the library should not be what W. L. George calls a "necropolis" but it should provide some of the best writing of our own day. Many brilliant modern

[1] See William S. Gray and Ruth Munroe, *The Reading Interests and Habits of Adults* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1929), pp. 83 and 85 on books preferred by adolescents.

SOME NEW ENGLAND LITERATURE PICTURES

A group of inexpensive pictures, suspended by common clips, may present many interesting associations with Hawthorne, Longfellow, Whittier, Emerson, and Holmes.

plays should be on the shelves to entice adventurous readers; for instance, such plays of O'Neill's as *Anna Christie* and *Marco Millions*. The plays selected should be those that high school students can readily appreciate. *The Pillars of Society* is not an illustration of Ibsen's highest dramatic art, but it serves admirably as a means of introducing high school pupils to Ibsen. Most of Shaw's comedies puzzle or shock the average high school senior, but *Candida* has a sort of humor that is universally relished. Since fiction and drama suffer only slight injury through translation, continental literature in these fields should be provided. Such a tragedy as Maeterlinck's *Pelléas and Mélisande* is simple enough and poignant enough to move and impress anybody. In order to encourage all types of reading the library should have many entertaining autobiographies such as Helen Keller's *Story of My Life*,[2] *The Americanization of Edward Bok*,[3] and Pupin's *From Immigrant to Inventor*.[4] It should have a few of the recent popular books on scientific and social themes such as Dorsey's *Why We Behave Like Human Beings*,[5] Wiggam's *The New Decalogue of Science*,[6] and *Dreiser Looks at Russia*.[7] It should have many books that aid daily assignments and that prevent the monotony resulting from de-

[2] Helen A. Keller, *The Story of My Life* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1903).

[3] Edward W. Bok, *The Americanization of Edward Bok* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921).

[4] Michael I. Pupin, *From Immigrant to Inventor* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923).

[5] G. A. Dorsey, *Why We Behave like Human Beings* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1926).

[6] A. E. Wiggam, *The New Decalogue of Science* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1924).

[7] Theodore Dreiser, *Dreiser Looks at Russia* (New York: H. Liveright, 1928).

pendence on one text. It should have a dozen copies of one or two comprehensive poetic anthologies. It should have a number of illustrated histories of English and American literature. For the purpose of oral reports it should have such inexpensive biographies as those of the *English Men of Letters* series. To aid debating it should have a goodly number of debaters' handbooks.[8]

Periodicals are also needed to develop the reading habit and to obtain composition material. If the number must be limited, choice must be made carefully. The problem is twofold, that of pleasing the popular taste and of elevating it. Unless we succeed in pleasing the popular taste, we shall be utterly ineffective in reducing the consumption of the "sex adventure story" magazine. The appalling extent of such consumption is proved by a glance at any news-stand as well as by statistics.[9] Accordingly, we must turn to good account the more hopeful tendencies of present taste. Various recent studies afford valuable guidance. If we consider popularity[10] and availability as helps in oral and written composition, the *Literary Digest* and the *National Geographic Magazine* must apparently be given preference. In choice of fiction magazines surely every one will concede that we ought to aim as high as we safely can. Although success has not yet crowned efforts in this direction,[11] it hardly seems chimerical to hope to educate high school taste up to the fiction of our cultural magazines. Through class

[8] *Debaters' Handbook Series* (New York: H. W. Wilson Company).

[9] Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1929), p. 241.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 231 and 239. Cf. Gray and Munroe, *op. cit.*, pp. 45 and 113, and the *Literary Digest*, September 28, 1929, Vol. 102, No. 13, p. 14.

[11] Gray and Munroe, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

assignment from time to time English teachers should familiarize their students with *Harper's,* the *Atlantic Monthly, Scribner's,* the *Century,* the *Survey,* the *World's Work,* the *Living Age,* the *American Mercury, Current History,* the *Forum,* and the *Review of Reviews.* If the library can have only three or four of this group, it might be well to change from year to year in order that students may become acquainted with a large number of magazines. Home making and fashion magazines may be important for home arts classes, but of course they cannot do very much toward awakening broad reading interests. On the other hand, scientific periodicals may vastly enlarge the reading outlook and they also afford many composition subjects. Bright scientific periodicals that are not too technical include the *Scientific American, Popular Science, Popular Mechanics.* From the standpoint of composition it is difficult to overrate the worth of weekly periodicals that deal with public questions. Dangers connected with bias are considerably reduced if classes can use simultaneously the *Outlook,* the *Nation, Time,* the *New Republic* and the *Literary Digest.* Complete neutrality and impartiality is the distinguishing recommendation of the *United States Daily* from Washington.

131. **Reference works.** — Daily preparation necessitates a few reference works. In addition to the unabridged dictionaries, Webster's *International,* the *Standard,* and the *Century,* there should be many copies of a small or medium-sized dictionary for general use. If alternative choice must be made, the latter are more important than the former. Although the unabridged dictionaries have

considerable material on the pronunciation of proper names, they are not so helpful as the *Century Cyclopedia of Names.*[12] Only a person who has rare knowledge of five or six foreign languages can easily dispense with this useful guide to pronunciation. Besides, anybody can get historical, biographical and geographical information very easily and quickly from this source. One type of work which we may presume the demands of various departments will tend to insure for the school library is a good encyclopedia. English teachers must constantly refer to classic mythology.[13] Hence, eight or ten copies of one good text will be more satisfactory for class assignments than single copies of five or six texts. A different principle operates with regard to books on usage.[14] Various authorities are desirable because there need not be class assignments but only occasional reference. Similarly, there should be a number of books giving synonyms so that juniors and seniors at work on a long paper may have assistance in the avoidance of monotonous phrasing.[15]

[12] Benjamin E. Smith and others, *The Century Cyclopedia of Names* (New York: Century Company, 1899).

[13] Possible books on Greek mythology are the following: Charles Mills Gayley, *Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art,* revised (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1911); Frances Ellis Sabin, *Classic Myths That Live To-day* (New York: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1927); H. A. Guerber, *Myths of Greece and Rome* (New York: American Book Company, 1904); Arthur Fairbanks, *Mythology of Greece and Rome* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1908).

[14] Possible books on usage are the following: Edwin C. Woolley, *Handbook of Composition,* revised edition (New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1920); John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Writer's Index of Good Form and Good English* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1923); H. N. MacCracken and Helen E. Sandison, *Manual of Good English* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1917).

[15] Possible books on synonyms are the following: P. M. Roget, *International Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases,* revised (New York: Longmans,

XXXII. THE READING OF THE ENGLISH TEACHER

Reference works and periodicals in the library can in part supply the teacher's needs. To a considerable extent he may be obliged to forage independently for his reading supplies. His reading should be chosen with the twofold purpose of making his class room presentation richer and more inspiring and of acquiring equipment for continued professional progress.

132. **The reading of current events.** — The English teacher must constantly skim many good periodicals. He cannot teach composition unless he has intelligent understanding of recent legislative, economic, and scientific movements. He must study lobbying activities, conflicts between pacifists and militarists, the control of government by big business, the efforts of various organizations to make the public schools agencies for propaganda, the attitudes of the American Federation of Labor, the new problems connected with traffic and radio, modern theories about health and social controls. If he has interests of this kind, he can introduce ideas that will banish dullness and languor from the class room. He can give his students composition subjects that have the freshness of prophecy. He must train himself in the habit of analyzing public questions so that he may be prepared to suggest modes of division to students engaged in writing exposition or argument.

133. **Literary study.** — Good English teaching is possible only through a strong foundation of knowledge pertaining to language and literature problems. Certain masterpieces are directly serviceable as guides to true inter-

Green and Company, 1925); George Crabb, *English Synonyms Explained* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1927); J. C. Fernald, *English Synonyms and Antonyms* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1921).

pretation and consequently to sound teaching. Every teacher should be conversant with the penetrating criticism scattered through Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria.* Ruskin's *Kings' Treasuries* is a forceful presentation of basic principles. Familiarity with such an essay as Arnold's *The Study of Poetry* will safeguard one from making grievous mistakes in teaching poetry. Among other books that have been stimulating mention might be made of Woodberry's *Appreciation of Literature,*[16] Bagehot's *Literary Studies,*[17] and Bliss Perry's *A Study of Prose Fiction.*[18] Innumerable high school teachers attest the singular helpfulness of Lafcadio Hearn's *Interpretations of Literature.*[19] Because Lafcadio Hearn was a teacher of college classes, a cosmopolitan thinker, and a brilliant critic, his mode of approach to an author or a poem is unsurpassed in clearness, skill, and literary sensitiveness. A teacher who has thoroughly absorbed the ideas of three or four such writers as these is likely to have a fundamentally true attitude with reference to guiding others.

The reading of the teacher should have the aim not only of securing correct orientation but also of accumulating literary information. The wealth in the storehouse should always be more extensive than the supplies in the shop windows. It is an easy matter to do some systematic reading in any of these superior books: Walker's *Literature of the*

[16] G. E. Woodberry, *Appreciation of Literature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Howe, 1921).

[17] Walter Bagehot, *Literary Studies* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910).

[18] Bliss Perry, *A Study of Prose Fiction* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920).

[19] Lafcadio Hearn, *Interpretations of Literature* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1915).

Victorian Era;[20] Beers' *History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century;*[21] Phelps' *The Beginnings of the Romantic Movement,*[22] Pattee's *History of American Literature since* 1870.[23] Even an English teacher whose sense of humor has been sadly impaired by overwork will chuckle with delight in devouring Chesterton's brief and breezy *Victorian Age in Literature.*[24] Such books contribute to the personal growth of the teacher and to his sense of relative values. His reading should include not only books which give principles of criticism, broad analysis, and sweeping surveys, but also those which provide entertaining concrete incidents. He should not neglect the field of biography with its vast stock of illustrative material. He can get dozens of humorous and illuminating anecdotes from such works as Boswell's *Life of Johnson* or Lucas' *Life of Charles Lamb.* He can often make the class period spicy if he knows the gossip in such books as De Quincey's *Reminiscences of the Lake Poets* or Hazlitt's *The Spirit of the Age.*

Acquaintance with modern literature should be steadily cultivated. High school pupils invariably prick up their ears when the English teacher is able to contrast the past with the present. There is fortunately an increasing tendency on the part of colleges and universities to meet the

[20] Hugh Walker, *The Literature of the Victorian Era* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1910).

[21] H. A. Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1899).

[22] W. L. Phelps, *The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1907).

[23] Fred Lewis Pattee, *A History of American Literature since 1870* (New York: Century Company, 1915).

[24] G. K. Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913).

demand for courses in contemporary literature. Many teachers, however, have not had such courses and may even be ignorant of literary conditions and influences that have prevailed during the past forty years. They will find an admirable picture of English literature during the closing decade of the nineteenth century in Jackson's *The Eighteen Nineties,*[25] and an equally satisfactory one of American literature during the same period in Beer's *The Mauve Decade.*[26] Some helpful books dealing with more recent times are Untermeyer's *American Poetry since* 1900,[27] Boynton's *Some Contemporary Americans,*[28] and Carl Van Doren's *Contemporary American Novelists.*[29] Frank Harris' *Contemporary Portraits*[30] is a unique work for which one must feel immeasurable gratitude. These essays portray some writers who are still occupying the center of the stage as well as many whose work was finished years ago. The vivid delineations, character-revealing anecdotes, and penetrating criticisms are directly helpful to class room comments and discussions. Every teacher should glance over such book reviews as are published in the quarterly supplements of weekly periodicals. The non-fiction best-sellers as listed in the *Bookman* are in many cases meritorious books that forecast trends in progressive thinking.

134. **Professional reading.** — The well-rounded teacher

[25] Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1922).

[26] Thomas Beer, *The Mauve Decade* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1926).

[27] Louis Untermeyer, *American Poetry since 1900* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1923).

[28] Percy H. Boynton, *Some Contemporary Americans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924).

[29] Carl Van Doren, *Contemporary American Novelists* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1922).

[30] Frank Harris, *Contemporary Portraits* (New York: Brentano's, 1915–23).

will seek professional guidance as eagerly as he seeks general culture. He will avoid narrow and warped conceptions of teaching problems and will not allow his methods to be based on any single authority. Among the books that treat the subject of English teaching in a broad and thoughtful manner are the following: *The Teaching of English in the Elementary and Secondary School* by Carpenter, Baker, and Scott;[31] Ward's *What is English?*;[32] Leonard's *English Composition as a Social Problem*;[33] Thomas' *The Teaching of English in the Secondary School*;[34] Stratton's *The Teaching of English in the High School*.[35] A teacher who reads books of this order with an open mind will be safe from the danger of falling into stereotyped practices. If he is able to give consideration to the more theoretical aspects of the complex language problem, he will find Lyman's *Summary of Investigations Relating to Grammar, Language and Composition*,[36] remarkably clear, judicial, and interesting.

Every issue of the *English Journal* should receive attention. It is true, indeed, that sometimes beginning teachers, perplexed by their special problems, are disappointed because they cannot get from two or three issues alone definite directions immediately applicable to all their difficulties.

[31] G. R. Carpenter, F. T. Baker and F. N. Scott, *Teaching of English in the Elementary and the Secondary School* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1913).

[32] C. H. Ward, *What is English?* (New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1925).

[33] S. A. Leonard, *English Composition as a Social Problem* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917).

[34] C. S. Thomas, *The Teaching of English in the Secondary School*, revised edition (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927).

[35] C. Stratton, *The Teaching of English in the High School* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1923).

[36] R. L. Lyman, *Summary of Investigations Relating to Grammar, Language and Composition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929).

Nevertheless, the *English Journal* has much to offer the constant and faithful reader. It presents great numbers of actual experiments with sincere reports of results. It has many suggestions concerning the proportioning of assignments to the ability of students. It offers a large range of composition projects. It recognizes the deficiencies which teachers feel in knowledge of contemporary literature and provides much detailed information concerning living English and American authors. It kindles enthusiasm for teaching and thus makes the work seem easier. It gives encouragement through the revelation that all English teachers encounter numerous problems and that they are solving some of these problems successfully.

XXXIII. PERSONAL CONTACTS

English teachers should cultivate personal contacts that may avert the narrowness incidental to close concentration on exacting tasks. They should visit classes of skilled teachers and attend group meetings and conventions. They should enlarge their community influence by giving talks or lectures on literary subjects as occasion demands.

135. **Association with other teachers.** — Teachers may often get new ideas by visiting classes. Many progressive schools wisely allow time for this purpose. It is true, indeed, that occasionally an enterprising teacher who has given a day to visiting may view the day as wasted and may return to his own classes with his self-complacency enhanced to an unfortunate degree. It is true that a visitor sometimes sees much routine that is both aimless and futile. These facts, however, should not cause one to regard the visiting of classes as sheer waste but should lead one to be careful

in the selection of class rooms visited. A person who is eager to improve his skating or his playing of tennis or his playing of chess takes care to observe the practices of experts. Likewise a novice in teaching should watch the methods of those who have won distinction and should attempt to apply to his own work the means which are the source of success. Attendance in group meetings of English teachers is also a means of grace that should not be neglected. Though we must be cautious about accepting with complete confidence every novel specific that in such meetings is offered us as a panacea, we can usually get some suggestions that we can put into actual practice. In any case, we gain benefit from the infectious zeal, absorption and enthusiasm that characterize a large number of our co-workers. From such gatherings we come away with more faith in our work, more hope for ourselves, and more charity for others.

136. **Preparation of lectures.** — For several reasons the English teacher should respond to requests for public talks on literature. Nothing conduces so much to a teacher's prestige as the power to serve the adult members of a community. A well equipped English teacher is able to impart a type of information that is in frequent and often in urgent demand. Moreover, an English teacher is morally obligated to perfect whatever talent he may have for public speaking. A sufficient reason is that his work demands emphasis of oral composition and speech making. He will be a better teacher for working out the elaborate and interesting presentation of some special literary themes. He might, for instance, select a living writer with whom he is congenial; he should then make a searching study of the

man and his work. In making preparation he must as far as possible use concrete material that has dramatic and emotional possibilities. He should also plan with special care several lantern lectures about places that have literary associations.[37] If such lectures are thoroughly prepared and can be given clearly and rapidly without notes, the auditors get a vast amount of information in a most agreeable manner. A lantern lecture should not mean merely the exhibition of pictures with scattered and incidental comment. The best results in attention and retention are gained if the speaker can give a very full discussion of each picture before, and not after, it appears on the screen. It is important that the speaker's mastery of material be full and adequate and that some degree of finish should be attained. In connection either with Scotland or Walter Scott pictures of the sort shown on the opposite page are eminently suitable.

XXXIV. MATERIALS OF VARIOUS KINDS

Having considered the growth and equipment of the English teacher, let us give some attention to materials that may be obtained for class room use. One of the most gratifying indications of educational progress is the increasing interchange of helps prepared by expert teachers. Among the diversified helps that are steadily growing in popularity are diagnostic grammar tests, practice leaves, maps, and pictures. Perhaps of all materials that a teacher can accumulate the most valuable are the plans and illustrations obtained through years of experience.

137. **Tests, practice leaves, and scales.** — Excellent diagnostic grammar tests that have been prepared in recent

[37] Lantern slides may be rented or borrowed from the extension divisions of many universities, from many city libraries, from the Pilgrim Photoplay Exchange, Chicago, from the Chicago Transparency Company, Chicago, from the Eastman Educational Slide Company, Iowa City, Iowa.

years give extremely reliable evidence on students' mastery of sentence structure.[38] In some high schools where these tests have been given as an experiment to juniors and seniors, the disclosures have startled both pupils and teacher. The result has been that even the pupils have recognized the necessity for immediate concentration on grammar study. Pupils also readily perceive the value of practice leaves. They are able on many of the exercises to drill themselves with little supervision by the teacher. Both the grammar tests and the practice leaves are having a perceptible influence in developing "sentence sense" in high school pupils and in raising the general standard of accuracy.

English teachers should be familiar with composition scales. It is true that composition scales have only limited utility. In the words of S. A. Leonard, "No scale is designed for marking daily work in composition; a scale is useful for an objective check-up at intervals of a term or semester or year."[39] In reality, scales are merely compositions of students with the average grade of many experienced teachers. Since in a given group of compositions the interest of one theme is derived from pathos, of another from humor, of a third from suspense, the teacher's rating is inevitably individual and subjective. The frequent disagreement of distinguished critics as to the merits of recent literature is quite in accord with the character of all subjective judgments. In judging mechanical errors, however, occasional watching of scales is helpful by causing the reader to keep in mind the

[38] Tests of this type can be obtained from the Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois.

[39] S. A. Leonard, "Building a Scale of Purely Composition Quality," *English Journal*, XIV, 760–775.

POST CARDS CONNECTED WITH SCOTT

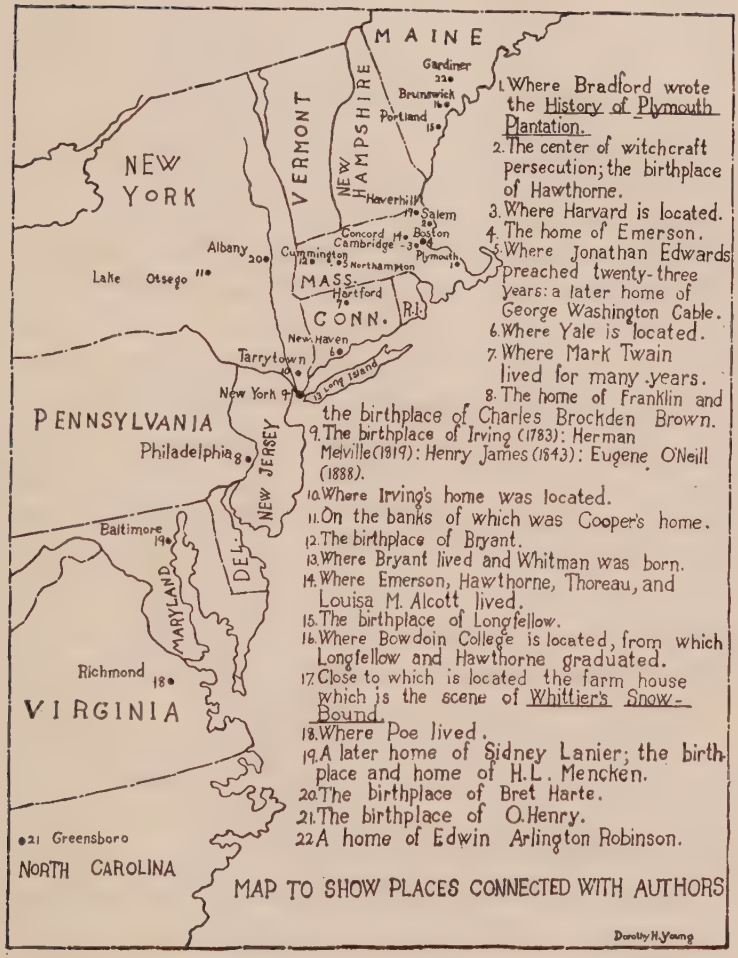
Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Palace, two paintings that explain where Scott got his big mouth (see Browning's poem, "Muckle Mouth Meg"), Melrose Abbey, Scott's Monument, Abbotsford, Scott's library.

relative seriousness of various mistakes. Probably the chief value to be derived from the use of scales is in the training which a teacher may give himself. He may improve his observation if he carefully grades a few compositions sent by the makers of scales, compares his rating with the standard rating in the key and then attempts to discover the causes of his deviation from the norm.[40]

138. Maps, diagrams, and pictures. — Maps and diagrams serve the purpose of giving useful information and of providing a concrete method. Any ninth grade class will enjoy *Treasure Island* more if each movement in the story is traced on a blackboard map. Similarly, although the poet who sang the *Odyssey* had no correct ideas of European geography, a map showing the wanderings of Odysseus makes the story easier for elementary pupils. The use of a diagram in teaching Irving's *Westminster Abbey* clarifies the descriptive passages as well as the architectural design of a great mediaeval church. In teaching *The Lady of the Lake* reality is gained by tracing in the Scottish highlands the route of Fitz-James and of the Fiery Cross. Map work not only simplifies but is also highly instructive. The English class room should be provided with a good literary map of England so that students may consult it frequently.[41] The *Wonderground Map* of London with its delightful jokes should hang within reach of the youthful reader and should be used to awaken interest in such places as Hyde Park, the

[40] On the general subject of scales see R. L. Lyman, *op. cit.*, pp. 195, 196, 197.

[41] An inexpensive literary map of England can be obtained from Ginn and Company, more expensive and elaborate literary maps of England from Rand, McNally and Company and from Macmillan Company and from R. R. Bowker Company.


MAINE
Gardiner 22
Brunswick 16
Portland 15
NEW HAMPSHIRE
VERMONT
NEW YORK
Haverhill 17
Salem 28
Concord
Cambridge 3
Boston 6
Plymouth 10
Albany 200
Cummington 12
Northampton 5
Lake Otsego 11
MASS.
Hartford 70
CONN.
R.I.
New Haven 60
Tarrytown 15
New York 9
Long Island
PENNSYLVANIA
Philadelphia 8
NEW JERSEY
Baltimore 19
DEL.
MARYLAND
Richmond 18
VIRGINIA
21 Greensboro
NORTH CAROLINA
1. Where Bradford wrote the History of Plymouth Plantation.
2. The center of witchcraft persecution; the birthplace of Hawthorne.
3. Where Harvard is located.
4. The home of Emerson.
5. Where Jonathan Edwards preached twenty-three years: a later home of George Washington Cable.
6. Where Yale is located.
7. Where Mark Twain lived for many years.
8. The home of Franklin and the birthplace of Charles Brockden Brown.
9. The birthplace of Irving (1783): Herman Melville (1819): Henry James (1843): Eugene O'Neill (1888).
10. Where Irving's home was located.
11. On the banks of which was Cooper's home.
12. The birthplace of Bryant.
13. Where Bryant lived and Whitman was born.
14. Where Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, and Louisa M. Alcott lived.
15. The birthplace of Longfellow.
16. Where Bowdoin College is located, from which Longfellow and Hawthorne graduated.
17. Close to which is located the farm house which is the scene of Whittier's Snow-Bound.
18. Where Poe lived.
19. A later home of Sidney Lanier; the birthplace and home of H.L. Mencken.
20. The birthplace of Bret Harte.
21. The birthplace of O. Henry.
22. A home of Edwin Arlington Robinson.
MAP TO SHOW PLACES CONNECTED WITH AUTHORS
Dorothy H. Young

STUDENT'S LITERARY MAP OF EASTERN AMERICA

Parliament Houses, Trafalgar Square, Fleet Street, and St. Paul's.[42] All students should have some experience in making literary maps. The map of American literature in this text was one selected from seventy maps made by two sections of students doing the same work. Teachers may vary the assignment from term to term by choosing different literary locations either in England or in America.[43]

Beautiful pictures may add much to the pleasure and profit of English classes. They go far toward correcting erroneous ideas of children whose imaginative concepts are based on too limited experience. The most valuable imaginative pictures are those that are famous as works of art. For instance, it would be a mistake to show pictures in teaching *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso;* in teaching Chaucer's *Prologue* it is an immense help to introduce Blake's magnificent panorama of the Canterbury Pilgrims. In connection with mythology high school students should become familiar with such works as the *Apollo Belvedere,* the *Aurora* of Guido Reni, and the *Laocoön.* In studying the *De Coverley Papers* students should see pictures of eighteenth century life. The *Mentor* "Venice" is especially helpful in illustrating *The Merchant of Venice.* St. Mark's, the Rialto, and the Doge's Palace should become permanently associated with Shylock, Antonio, and Bassanio. Students who read *Daisy Miller* and *The Marble Faun* must know the appearance of St. Peter's and the Colosseum as well as

[42] *The Wonderground Map of London Town,* published by the Westminster Press, can be obtained from 11 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London.

[43] For numerous sources of materials see M. N. Woodring and R. T. Benson, *Enriched Teaching of English in the High School* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1927).

the historical meaning of these vast structures. Pictures may be passed around the class, attached by clips and suspended, or grouped on cardboard.[44]

139. **Plans and illustrative material.** — Some sort of plan book is a necessity for efficient English teaching. Plans should never be jotted down on the margins of textbooks. When put into such space, they are brief, scrappy, and poorly organized. Moreover, students are likely to suspect that the teacher has not sufficient knowledge and hopes to get assistance from the text. A convenient way of keeping lesson plans is to use a small loose-leaf leather-back book which opens like a regular book and can be held in the same manner. Good plans which have been prepared in this way can be easily filed for future reference. In using plans a second time the teacher must of course beware of "canned" teaching. He must again experience the enthusiasm or fire connected with the first working out of a project. But he can profit by reviewing his original analysis with its skillfully phrased questions, make additional improvements, and each time carry his teaching to a higher degree of excellence. Good exercises in grammar or mechanics serve successive classes as well as the first class for whom they were composed.

From the writing of students various materials should be accumulated. We can make language theory more vital if we cull from observation ludicrous mistakes of syntax and

[44] Some sources of postcards are British Museum, London, England; John Clapperton, "Fir Knowe," Galtonside, Melrose, Roxburyshire, Scotland; Detroit Publishing Company, Detroit, Michigan. Other sources of pictures are Perry Picture Company, Malden, Massachusetts, Mentor Picture Company, Springfield, Ohio.

rhetoric. Illustrations compiled from textbooks are dull in comparison with those which come from one's own experience. A teacher had no trouble with fine writing by the seniors after he read them this sample, which he had found in a student's oration: "When they parted from brothers, sons, and husbands, their tears ran down their cheeks and mingled with the dew." He was able to illustrate mixed metaphors by a student's sentence: "The ship of state is sailing over a boiling cauldron." He was successful in explaining anti-climax by a student's evident effort to conciliate the reader of his themes: "The real harm from reading trashy literature is not merely that it corrupts the morals but that it has a bad effect on one's use of English." Furthermore, all remarkably good work should be saved. The strongest speeches, the most convincing stories, and the most humorous essays which a teacher receives may serve as standards in subsequent composition teaching. Unless the teacher saves the best themes, he will not have them ready at the proper time for reading. The proper time for reading such themes comes when students are working on similar composition projects. They are likely to be paralyzed if they are familiar only with masterpieces by men of genius. They feel encouraged and stimulated when they see what has been done by young people whose advancement was identical with their own and whose natural abilities were probably not superior. Class pride is often aroused by letting this year's class see what other classes have done.

Various materials that have been mentioned in this chapter go far toward the enrichment of English teaching. It is,

of course, always true that results in English are more dependent on the teacher than on any aids or materials. It is perhaps true that if the English teacher could be a Mark Hopkins, only a log would be needed. This assumption, however, should be viewed as one contrary to fact. Consequently, we cannot afford to do without any helps or aids that will give brightness and variety to our work. We have no right to make our class rooms unnecessarily dull. Through all sorts of pictures, magazines, and books we should connect composition and literature with art, science and sociology.

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Let each member of the Methods class report a helpful suggestion found in the *English Journal* during the past six months.
2. Consult several experienced teachers about the preferred style of plan book and the best ways of filing lesson plans and valuable illustrative material.
3. Let some member of the Methods class prepare a blackboard map of London and environs, such as might be made by high school seniors in a survey course on English literature. Let the map show in relation to the Thames the location of the Tower, St. Paul's, the Temple Gardens, Westminster Abbey, Twickenham, Stoke Poges Churchyard, Eton, and Windsor Castle.
4. Let some member of the class arrange a group of Venice pictures and show the class how the pictures would be used to prepare ninth grade pupils for reading *The Merchant of Venice*.
5. Let some member of the Methods class through using pictures of the Shakespeare stage and theater show how Elizabethan staging might be explained to high school students.

6. Ask any experienced English teachers whom you know what pictures in their possession have been most satisfactory and helpful in teaching.
7. Let two members of the Methods class comment on the literary merit of the fiction and non-fiction best-sellers listed in the last two issues of the *Bookman*.

CHAPTER VIII

SUGGESTIONS TO YOUNG TEACHERS

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Many college graduates begin the complicated task of English teaching without adequate professional preparation. They often lack the knowledge that would enable them to make needed adjustments in their complex professional relations. In some cases they have not had their attention directed to class room observances that have a vital relation to success. The general suggestions in this chapter may be of some immediate value to the inexperienced. Our first consideration will be the unwritten laws that govern one's relation to supervisors and fellow teachers.

140. General standards. — By professional ethics we mean the principles of right, fairness, justice and honor directly applied to the special temptations and difficulties incidental to teaching. The prospective teacher, if forewarned, may avoid some dangerous pitfalls. From the beginning he should strive for an unblemished professional record. He should resolve neither to get nor to hold a position through influence or pull. Pull may be based on ties of kinship, on ties of friendship, on the importance of family or of money, on church affiliation, on connection with a dominant political party, and on many other claims. The effect of pull on teaching efficiency is altogether vicious. The highest type of teacher will be on guard against showing favoritism to the children of board members or of influential townspeople. The highest type of teacher will seek

public approval through meritorious service and will scorn any less worthy sort of support. The highest type of teacher will honor his profession and will endeavor to make it more honorable by his own scrupulous conduct.

141. **Relation to the superintendent.** — Some very important matters of ethics have to do with the teacher's relation to the superintendent. Every teacher who accepts a contract morally binds himself to a monarchical system in which the superintendent has technically and theoretically absolute authority. This situation still obtains even though in actual working the relationship should be highly cooperative. It is therefore a duty for the teacher to conform to all decisions made by the head of the school or by any group of persons to whom he delegates the right to make decisions. The teacher is under a tacit obligation to refrain from criticizing the policies adopted by his superiors. When such criticism is made either to students or to the general public, it is quite justly considered treasonable. Because teachers are expected to confer about school matters only with the superintendent or principal, it is unprofessional for a teacher to discuss school policies with a board member or to cultivate undue intimacy with a board member. A teacher has the right to appeal to the board from a decision given by the superintendent but is in duty bound to inform the superintendent concerning the intention to appeal. Although such an appeal made in a frank manner is entirely ethical, it is usually viewed by the superintendent as a declaration of open war and it is seldom prudent or expedient.

142. **Relation to other teachers.** — A teacher must beware of professional sins not only against his superior but

also against other teachers. The right kind of teacher will not apply for a position in a small system unless he knows that a vacancy has been already created: he would be unwilling for his application to contribute to the removal of some weak or mediocre teacher. As he desires to maintain high standards in the profession, he will never be guilty of underbidding. The practice of underbidding is almost invariably connected with secrecy and deceit. Not only in the matter of getting positions but also in the daily routine of teaching, it is of paramount importance to be fair toward fellow workers. One should never make or hear derogatory remarks about one's fellow teachers. It is very easy but very discreditable to be one of those who

> Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
> And without sneering teach the rest to sneer.

The more a fellow teacher is in direct rivalry with oneself, the more unbecoming is it to hear or to say something unfavorable. Criticism of a predecessor who has left the town is ethically not so serious but is a form of unprofessionalism that should be avoided. If the pupils who come to us have had no thorough training, we have sufficient opportunity to manifest our superiority by our more effective teaching. Unprofessionalism that is even criminal consists in giving students information about faculty or committee discussions, in betraying to students confidential remarks made by teachers, or in taking sides with students against fellow teachers. It is gross unprofessionalism to criticize a fellow teacher to a principal or a superintendent unless clear warning of the intention is first given to the fellow teacher. In comparison

with these grave offenses selfishness and self-advertisement are minor faults. Though selfishness is not so wicked as treachery, the greedy seizure of numerous advantages through an accidental emergency is unfair and ultimately meets merited punishment. While self-advertisement is only a peccadillo, it is a mark of the quack in teaching as it is of the quack in the medical profession. The really genuine and worthy teacher in all his relations with others makes every effort to keep his professional honor untarnished, to meet the exacting requirements of a strict professional code, and to satisfy the high standards of candor, sincerity, fairness, and magnanimity.

XXXV. THE PERSONALITY OF THE TEACHER

Every one is familiar with the hackneyed saying that in teaching personality is the chief source of influence. Personality is difficult to analyze and is singularly elusive. Every desirable quality of mind and character contributes its quota to form the personality most influential in teaching. Here our only attempt can be to note a few traits that have direct and immediate value and that in the main are attainable.

143. **Appearance and presence.** — There are four or five qualities of personality to which the beginning teacher should give special thought. In the deepest sense, of course, personality cannot be modified by conscious effort. But in a superficial sense it can be improved. The first impression of personality is made through appearance and physical presence. Appearance can be transformed through clothes. Superintendents, seeking teachers at employment bureaus, overlook many considerations but they seldom fail to inquire about the taste in dress of any woman candidate. Vitality

and an erect figure are even more important than dress. These can be attained by almost any one who does not call two hours of daily lounging "resting," who is willing to use the available two hours in active open air exercise, and who observes with consistency the general laws of good health. The physical effect of personality is determined not only by dress and vigor but also by the quality of the voice. Observation, care, and pains will go far toward making the schoolroom voice clear, distinct, smooth, varied, and sympathetic.

144. **Dignity and self-control.** — A quality of character that counts for much is determination as manifested in quiet self-control and dignity. Just because boys and girls are painfully conscious of their own spasmodic tendencies and their own lack of poise, they have extreme respect for the teacher whose self-possession is apparent. Many a high school principal explains the failure of a young woman teacher by saying, "She put herself too much on a level with the pupils. After she had been with them socially, she seemed to lose all hold on them." Possibly this diagnosis is not entirely accurate. At the same time the young teacher who loses her hold in this way has the foolish desire that her pupils shall temporarily forget her relation to them. Teachers must so honor their vocation that they never wish to be oblivious of the high responsibilities that it entails. Self-mastery and dignified bearing are obligatory at all times. We should preserve our self-control in the class room by anticipating perplexing problems and solving them as best we can in hours when we are alone. We should not postpone decisions about handling our work until the class has assembled. It is often better to make an unwise decision

than to appear puzzled or vacillating. Quiet unwavering will is as powerful as the faith that moves mountains.

Unfailing and unalterable cheerfulness, which is in reality one manifestation of self-control, is another quality that makes an immense impression on young people. Unfortunately the effect that too many teachers have on young people is exactly that so aptly described by Carlyle:

> My schoolmaster, a downbent, brokenhearted, underfoot martyr, as others of that guild are, did little for me except discover that he could do little.

It would be singular if a teacher of that type could do anything for anybody. We have the type still with us. Many a teacher yields to moods which his students learn to watch with some fear but with more contempt. Boys and girls regard a moody teacher as weak and they have an extreme scorn of weakness. On the other hand, they respond to uniform hopefulness and buoyancy. A group of high school boys were heard discussing two teachers who had successively acted as sponsors of their literary society. "Mr. Smith takes a great deal of interest in our work," remarked one of the boys, "but he seems worried when things don't go well. Mr. Brown always thought things were going well and that made us try hard and do our very best." Is it not a matter of common knowledge that buoyant optimism of manner is the result not of circumstances but of will and that it is within the attainment of all who sufficiently desire it? Has not the public as much reason for valuing a teacher who conceals depression as it has for valuing the furnace that consumes its own smoke? Is it not true of us all that long after we have forgotten the content of a course, we

remember the person of the teacher if by some lucky chance we had a teacher of inspiring personality ?

145. **Sympathetic imagination.** — Sympathetic imagination may also be cultivated. If we acquire the habit of considering the student's viewpoint, we shall not be in danger of treating high school boys and girls as if they were in the kindergarten stage. If we get the student's viewpoint, we are able to judge the type of assignment suitable to his ability; we are kept from assigning tasks so difficult as to cause him to have a sense of defeat or tasks so easy as to be an insult to his intelligence. If we get the student's viewpoint, we shall not preach goody-goody sermons at inopportune seasons. If we get the student's viewpoint, we are not likely to quote yards of poetry in our English classes. If we get the student's viewpoint, we can detect to what degree the most polite class really feel bored and in what particulars they are inclined to criticize us. Sympathetic imagination means that we divine the thoughts and the life of our students as if by intuition. An educator whose reputation is now national has had this faculty to such marked degree that it developed a curious legend. The man had begun his professional career as principal of a village high school. His students found that he apparently knew exactly what they had been doing in all their spare time. After a lapse of twenty years admiring villagers still seriously explain his miraculous clairvoyance by the absurd story that he nightly prowled around the lighted windows of every home in order to know which boys and girls were studying properly. The villagers have never ceased to wail because they cannot secure another omniscient principal to exert an

ideal influence over their children. If we imaginatively put ourselves in the place of each student whom we teach, we can be judicious and tactful in our complex relation to many different temperaments.

146. **Sociability.** — Closely connected with sympathetic imagination is the broadly social attitude which contributes much to the influence of the teacher. Seeking to be sociable, we must not misinterpret our aim. The aim of sociability does not imply that we should tolerate encroachment upon time that belongs to school work. It does not imply that we should put ourselves on the same plane with the pupils. It does not imply that we may take lightly our chief responsibility to do strong teaching. It rather means that we find contact with students whose dispositions differ widely. It means that we easily and naturally lead young people to talk with us of their various sports, pleasures, hopes, and ambitions. A friendly attitude on the part of the teacher goes far toward securing co-operation, which is always the basis of truly successful teaching.

XXXVI. PREPARATION BY TEACHER AND STUDENTS

If we had the right to say that successful high school work hinges on one definite thing, the one thing that should be selected would be preparation by the teacher and by the students. The most important single bit of advice that can be given to a prospective English teacher is that he not only master daily the subject matter that he teaches but that he plan all the particulars of class room procedure. The regular preparation of assignments by students depends primarily on some specific methods which we shall also examine.

147. **The teacher's plans.** — Some people might argue that the personal characteristics most desirable for the

teacher are native rather than acquired and that they are not to be won through effort. Whether or not such a position is sound, there are fortunately some quite definite and not difficult observances that go a long way toward enabling any teacher to score a success. A practice that insures against defeat is daily planning of assignment and procedure. Failure to plan in any complete sense is the largest single cause of weak and sterile teaching. In English it is especially disastrous because of the bewildering range and variety of subject matter. This lack of planning was exemplified in a recent report of a class by a visitor. The teacher wasted the whole period on a very simple assignment to the disgust of the wearied pupils. After a roll call he sent to the library for Hawthorne's short stories. Five minutes were gone before the books arrived. The teacher then spent forty minutes in turning through the stories and in speculating whether this or that story would interest Henry or Jane. Of course in making the individual assignments he could get no suggestions from the children, who had read very little of Hawthorne. Naturally they were listless and bored. The fact is that many English teachers go into their class rooms knowing neither the questions that they are to ask nor the ideas and views that they wish to develop. They believe that they have planned their work because they have read the material. They somehow trust that the class room exigencies will guide them. The result is that they are as helpless as mariners adrift without chart or compass. Becoming accustomed to dull class periods spent in a purposeless fashion, they soon lose all critical judgment. Such teaching habits preclude the attainment of ultimate power

and efficiency. When the manufacturers of typewriters seek to train high-speed typists, they reproduce in slow motion pictures the movements of each typist. They have no hope for the development of any typist who has a constant tendency to make any useless movement. Teachers who ramble in vacillating and uncertain fashion and fail to direct their class room work toward definite goals are more likely to deteriorate than to improve. For their anaemic teaching they offer the specious excuse, "I do my best work when I teach by inspiration." In this remark there is a deceptive half truth. The teacher does his best work when after careful organization of subject matter he is in sympathy with the impulses and interests of the class. But he should never expect inspiration to be a substitute for planning and he should never forget that ideal adaptation is the result of ideal preparation.

148. **Securing preparation by students.** — The most zealous forethought should be given not only to planning the program of each class period but also to securing daily preparation by the students. Just because high school students know that they have reached a stage in life when they must depend mainly on themselves, they are scornful of work that requires too little individual study. The boy who answered an inquiry about his schedule by saying that he carried "three subjects and English" insinuated that he had little respect for the teaching of the mother tongue. In English no less than in other high school subjects an extreme value ought to be attached to the class reaction as evidenced by thorough daily preparation. Preparation is greatly affected by the character of the assignment. For the lazy,

the dilatory, and the spasmodic students reasonably short assignments are a powerful incentive to faithful work. Assignments may be gradually lengthened when improvement is observed. Teachers should vividly imagine their pupils in actual preparation and should gauge carefully the exact nature of the varied tasks in English study. Thus they will be saved from assigning an excessive and impossible amount of work on one day and on the next so small an amount that it seems farcical. In all assignments definiteness carried to the *n*th degree will do more than any other one thing to get results. Study questions may seem mechanical, but they develop habits of application. If there is the possibility that some pupils may not understand how to attack certain new types of lessons, an occasional class period should be turned into a study period. Thus the teacher can guide the pupil's efforts and can point the road to successful mastery. Moreover, he will discover the precise extent to which details are needed in assignments.

The attitude of the teacher may also develop responsibility for preparation. His attitude should be exacting and yet fair and considerate. Students have little respect for a teacher whom they regard as "loose" or "easy." The proper attitude on the part of the teacher implies a liberal but discriminating treatment of excuses provided these are not frequent and are made before and not after the recitation. A brief explanation in class will convince all the pupils that excuses for failure may not properly be presented after the recitation. They will readily recognize it as unfair for a student to wait to see whether he will be called on, and then to claim the advantage of an excuse. Besides, in classes

where proper standards are maintained every class failure is a source of embarrassment to teacher and class. Sometimes at the beginning of the period the teacher should inquire whether any of the questions assigned could not be answered or whether any topics were not understood. The habit of making such an inquiry leads to better understanding between teacher and pupil and creates a feeling of keen responsibility for watching the topics and questions. Finally, in taking up the lesson proper very careful attention should be given to the exact material assigned.

In order to encourage systematic preparation it is of signal importance always to cover the assignment of the day. If the prepared assignment is fully covered and faithfulness is thus immediately recognized, the incentive is provided for further study. On the other hand, if the class discussion of an assignment is postponed a day or two, the pupil whose memory is not retentive becomes disheartened and concludes that effort is useless. However conscientious he may be, he will henceforth judge it the part of wisdom to go to the picture show rather than to prepare an assignment that may not be touched. A discerning high school boy implied a just criticism in this pungently sarcastic remark about his next recitation with an unsuccessful teacher, "Possibly we may catch up with day before yesterday's review." The inefficiency of many high school teachers is due to the fact that they are habitually behind their assignments. Teachers who are delinquent in this particular should note that it is just as easy to walk on a line with another as to walk steadily two paces behind. The teacher who has fallen into this bad habit may even now retrieve. By ceasing to digress or by

going over material rapidly or by omitting the discussion of one entire lesson he should cover the lost ground and should not again let himself fall behind.

The right kind of daily testing is essential. The right kind of testing means that rhetoric and literature texts remain closed during part of the class period. It means too, that there is no volunteering on questions for which every student individually can rightfully be held responsible. It means that questions dependent on study, attention, and effort are not given to volunteers. The teacher who frequently gives such questions to volunteers is simply shirking and shamming. He is shirking the responsibility that rests on him of developing in all his students habits of faithful preparation and close attention. He is shamming in his refusal to see the weakness in general class preparation or in his attempt to conceal that weakness from some one else. Unhappily, the temptation to such shamming is often powerful because many superintendents and supervisors are completely fooled whenever half the members of a class seem very eager to recite and frantically wave their hands. Comparatively rare is the type of criticism made by an able superintendent in his teachers' meeting:

> In going my rounds I have occasion to wonder whether a question is ever put to any one except a volunteer. If only some one responds when you ask, "Who will explain this ?" you seem to feel a satisfactory assurance that the point is disposed of. In reality, it is not disposed of at all, so far as the class is concerned.

Pupils who recite in the volunteer fashion quickly drop into habits of careless and meagre preparation. Why should they

prepare the entire assignment if the study of one-third of the lesson suffices to satisfy requirements? Indeed, a certain group of high school students actually formed the practice of dividing the material of a lesson among themselves, of distributing individual assignments, and of making an eager effort to recite on the small part carefully prepared. For such misapplied ingenuity the responsibility must rest on the teacher who neglects to test preparation completely and thoroughly.

Recognition of faithfulness has an important influence on future preparation. It is not only just but also politic. Students have an immediate feeling of resentment and a final attitude of indifference after they have toiled long and hard over an assignment and find that their work is ignored. Conversely, those who find that the approbation of the teacher is the meed of earnest study are spurred on to continued effort. Often it is both possible and beneficial to give honorable mention to two-thirds of a class. When a test is given the results of which are dependent on energy rather than on ability, the class ought to hear the names of the two-thirds who were moderately successful. Thus at one time or another students who are not especially strong may win some distinction by increased effort. It is not easy to overrate the benefit of absolutely sincere discriminating praise.

On the other hand, criticism for failure to prepare will have a good effect only if it is made privately. If public reproof is directed toward one or two people in a class, it has the appearance of being due to personal animosity or momentary irritation. If it is directed toward a third or

a half of the class, it is a boomerang hitting only the instructor. We can get preparation from twenty-seven out of thirty high school students if only we do not use unsuitable or too difficult material, if only we do not assign an unreasonably large quantity of work, and if only we have not hopelessly demoralized the class by our past pedagogical record. Since these conditions are mainly within our control, it is inexplicable that many teachers make sarcastic criticisms in public concerning the failure of students to do work assigned. It is fortunate that the victims of the criticism are unaware that the self-complacent critics are the real culprits. Class room censoriousness has no effect apart from the fact that it stifles all sympathy that students might feel with the teacher. But personal criticism given in a fair spirit usually causes students to work more faithfully. Judicious personal advice may be the saving of a student who is lazy or spasmodic or inclined to dissipate his energy on too many interests.

Some teachers practice a method of securing preparation which is not altogether futile but which is grossly unjust. It is unfair to require students to report whether they have read certain books, pages, or poems, or how much time they have spent on a lesson. In one case a teacher announced that a number of poems must be memorized; she said nothing more about the matter until the term examination and then included the question, "Have you memorized the poems assigned ?" We must not be blinded to the grave objections connected with asking reports of work from students. In the first place, the teacher is relieving himself of the responsibility for thorough testing. Through allowing himself to

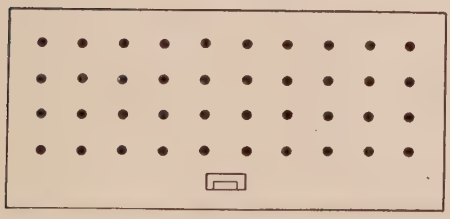
shirk in this way he is reducing his power to test and to teach. Furthermore, the pupils resent the inquiry and feel that it is the teacher's business to find out by legitimate questions based on the reading. A few of them may get the false idea that education is to be obtained mechanically by covering so many pages or by holding a book for so many hours. But the most serious objection is the unhappy moral effect. It is easy to see that reports on reading or study place at a disadvantage any one who is scrupulously conscientious in his statements. We ought not to cherish the delusion that we can foster lofty moral aspirations by placing a premium on equivocation. Questions of the proper type do not penalize honesty and they have a permanently stimulating effect on habits of study.

XXXVII. CLASS ROOM PRACTICES

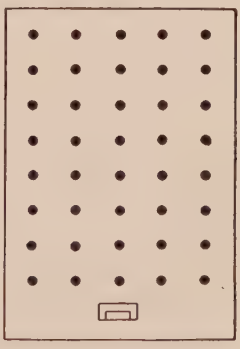
We now pass from the fundamental matter of securing faithful preparation to class room practices conducive of ready response and sustained interest. Practices that tend to create an alert sympathetic class room atmosphere are not to be viewed as trivial or insignificant. Both the work and the reputation of a teacher profit vastly by sociable class room arrangements, avoidance of waste and monotony, correct form in putting questions, able guidance of discussions and digressions, and courteous manners of students in response.

149. **The promotion of intercourse.** — We want our students not only to acquire habits of application but also to give to one another the results of their study. To the end that intercourse may be free and easy, attention should be paid to seating arrangements. The hostess plans such grouping of a dinner party as will insure communicativeness; the teacher should not be satisfied to do less. Of the

various modes of seating no other arrangement is equal to the circular or semicircular. Such seating is natural, sociable, and friendly, exactly what people use in their own homes. Every speaker can look at everybody else. There is, however, one disadvantage in the circular seating: it is not the best for a lecture period or for an oral composition period. But if the seats are movable, a change to rows in rectangular form is a simple matter. Besides, the recitation, not the lecture, is the typical class procedure in the American high school. Any ambitious teacher who once has a chance to try the circular arrangement is likely henceforth to view the traditional rows as unfriendly barricades. If indeed such rows must be used, there is still a better and a worse form. The diagrams below illustrate:



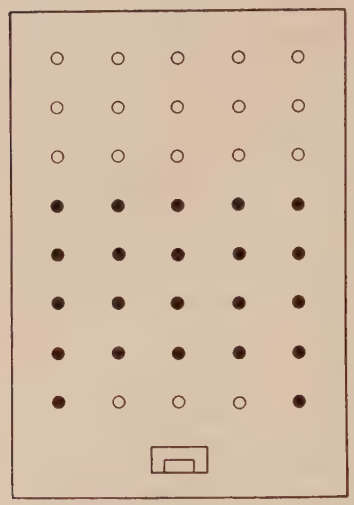
PLAN A
The Better Form.



PLAN B
The Incorrect Form.

In the usual recitation students speak standing beside their seats. With Plan B it is far more difficult for all students to hear and see all speakers than it is with Plan A. If a teacher is assigned a rectangular room with lighting unilateral and the windows on the long side, and is unfortunate

enough to have forty pupils in the class, he cannot avoid Plan B. But frequently he has several smaller classes with which he can follow the correct principle even in this type of room. For instance, should he have a class of just twenty-two, he should use the seats indicated on Plan C.



PLAN C
Correct Seating in the Small Class.

In order to encourage responsiveness the teacher must early learn the names and faces of his students. Any teacher can quickly become familiar with names and faces if he calls the names from his class list and rapidly distributes numerous short questions that give everybody an opportunity to answer. Short faulty sentences for correction by various students admirably serve the purpose. Unfortunately many high school teachers after the lapse of three or four weeks still do not recognize the faces of their students. They have kept their eyes focused on grade cards or on written plans. The consequence is that their teaching has an indescribable effect of remoteness. They are often viewed by young people as knowledge machines deficient in humanity. On the other hand teachers who in the first few days of a term know and understand each individual are likely to find that all their students are eager to participate in the recitation.

150. **Conservation of time.** — Interest in the class room is dependent on the profitable use of every moment. Waste of time inevitably results in languor and somnolence. In too many class rooms there is serious waste through the calling of a long roll. A student may be appointed to look over a plat of the class and to hand in the names of the absentees. There are other small tasks that can be expeditiously performed through the co-operation of students. If three or four students are regularly assigned the task of collecting themes, of arranging these for the teacher's convenience in alphabetical order, of reporting any that are missing, only two minutes will be needed. In order to save time in dictating an assignment or giving directions about work the teacher should tactfully train students to postpone questions until the full explanation has been completed. On the other hand, there is no waste if all students are occupied in a useful activity. It is erroneous to regard all dictation of references or of assignment as a waste of time and to maintain that such material should invariably be placed for copying on a blackboard or a bulletin board. School arrangements are often such as to make the copying outside of class hours a matter of extreme inconvenience both to teacher and to students. There is real danger that the difficulties may be great enough to justify a failure to copy or to obtain the material. Class time, however, must not be used to an excessive degree for merely routine matters. As the combined time of many people, it must be carefully conserved for the enlightening interchange of ideas.

151. **Good form in questioning.** — The attention and concentration of a class are visibly affected by the manner

in which the teacher puts his questions. He should speak clearly, distinctly, and evenly. He should neither hesitate nor speak too fast. After he has finished the statement of the question, he should pause for about six to ten seconds before calling the name of a student. This slight interval of suspense does not reduce but powerfully stimulates interest. During this interval before any one has been called upon, a student who does not understand the question should be expected to indicate the fact. He should not wait until he has been personally named before he announces that he does not understand the question. In making the question clear the teacher should not repeat his previous words but should rephrase the idea. During this interval unless the question is distinctly one for volunteers, pupils should be expected not to raise their hands or otherwise demonstrate their assurance. The teacher must not by even a glance betray who is to be called upon. If he finds it difficult to call on students at unexpected times, he may possibly find the card system helpful. He prepares a set of cards with the names of the pupils. He shuffles these cards and calls on the pupils in the order in which their cards turn up. Whether or not he uses the card system, he must conceal the intended direction of his question as skillfully as the good baseball pitcher conceals the intended direction of the ball. If he becomes an expert in this particular, he can train all the students mentally to formulate their answers and to have these ready. The time when the student should be doing his hard thinking is before, not after his name is called. When the name of a student is called, a prompt answer should be expected.

Though volunteer work should be used only occasionally, it may be made to increase alertness and interest. We should call on volunteers to answer those development questions that make an especially heavy demand on general knowledge, keen perception, analytical power, and originality. It is quite useless and very unkind to humiliate students because they lack these resources. But questions should be so given as to accelerate the thought and effort of all and to create in every one a keen desire to respond. Before calling the individual name the teacher should wait a moment or two if he can thus get a larger number of volunteers. He should always have in mind the goal of a development question and should be ready to detect and to accept the true idea that may be phrased in a clumsy fashion. In a discussion of the characters of *As You Like It,* a certain teacher denied the statement of a little girl that Jaques was a "funny" character; he should have divined the fact that the child was expressing a correct notion but simply had not in her vocabulary the word "satirical." Every opportunity should be utilized to develop and encourage timid, shy, and diffident students. Two or three glib, voluble talkers should not monopolize the period. In developing the ideas for an original composition skill and success are in direct ratio with the number of the class who contribute suggestions. In all volunteer questions and discussions there should be proof that the ideas are assimilated by those who are not able to respond.

Should there be uncertainty as to whether every one has appropriated an idea, various students may be asked for a restatement or an elaboration. The teacher should not re-

peat the answer given by a student. Many teachers of English have the deplorable habit of repeating in parrot style half of the answers to questions. These teachers apparently cherish the delusion that not until they have repeated the answer can there be any impressiveness or finality. The teacher asks, "What is coherence?" When the student has perhaps said, "Coherence is good connection," the teacher echoes in a slightly louder tone, "Yes, coherence is good connection." The twofold result is that the class are wearied by the repetition and are confirmed in a tendency to indistinct enunciation. Why should they listen to what is difficult to hear when the teacher is sure to reiterate with clearer emphasis? Why should they in turn strive for effective modulation when the teacher seems to understand them and will give their answers by the reliable megaphone process? The attention of teachers cannot be too urgently called to the importance of avoiding this unfortunate practice. In those cases where the thought needs further elucidation, the teacher may linger on the idea provided he rephrases it and thus gives it from a new angle. In the illustration cited above, while approving the pupil's definition of coherence, he might himself add, "Yes, it is an effect of smoothness in passing from any part of a composition to the next part." The self-imposed requirement of rephrasing is an effective safeguard against monotony.

152. **Discussions and digressions.** — As there are special problems connected with questioning, there are special problems connected also with the expression of personal opinion. Because a strong English teacher asks many questions that train judgment, he provokes thought not always in agree-

ment with his own conclusions. Consequently, the best teaching results in some spirited and lively discussions. Animation and warmth of feeling on the part of various members of a class make it imperative that the teacher exercise tactful, impartial, and judicious control. The student who has positive convictions should have a fair chance to present his views and to persuade others. This end is defeated if the teacher permits members of the class who have not been called on to contradict in half audible tones the statements of the person reciting. The student who has the floor must have all the floor. He must not be disturbed by half audible murmurs or by the sight of a number of hands raised to indicate dissent. He must recognize that, having had his full opportunity, he can again have the floor only in turn. The minute he has finished, those who have waited politely must have their chance. When partisan opinion is very intense, the teacher who does not find it necessary to express his view should give an even chance to both sides. If the discussion runs to great length, he may rule that no one is to have the floor more than once. If he finds himself at variance with two or three members of the class and considers the correct view of real moment, he can so fairly manage the argument as to keep any one from feeling irritation. Let him state his position with whatever arguments he can adduce and then permit only those students who differ from him to close the discussion. A teacher had better lose if he cannot win without the last word. In reality, this fairness toward opponents of his position usually wins the argument and it always wins the sympathy of the class.

So far we have been considering discussions strictly germane to the regular program. The question arises as to whether we have the right to allow discussions that are not germane to the regular program. Are we warranted in leaving the assignment for the day when some interesting subject not strictly relevant allures us? The answer to this question depends on whether we can meet some definite conditions. In the first place, we must not digress unless we can also cover the main plan of work for the day. Digressions are too often tolerated because the teacher is not sufficiently familiar with the details of the lesson plan and not sufficiently sure of the goal to be attained. A teacher who was in this position and who was therefore encouraging an irrelevant discussion was justly rebuked in the presence of visitors by the apparently innocent inquiry from a student, "Miss Jones, I should like to ask what this has to do with our work." Moreover, a digression is legitimate only if it follows the strong intellectual curiosity of the pupils, only if it furnishes an answer to some inquiry in their minds, only if it throws the side lights of living on language and on literature. A digression which serves these purposes may mean both instantaneous response and the winning of sympathy for all time. A high school English teacher has narrated an incident in her experience. She was long unable to explain a sudden change of attitude shown by a girl in the junior class. The girl, who had been extremely reserved and almost antagonistic, all at once became communicative and began to co-operate with the teacher in every possible way. Months afterward by a sort of accident the change was explained. The girl had been

won over because an incidental discussion had shown that some unusual views which she held were accepted by the teacher. Incidental discussions of the right kind keep knowledge from seeming dead by enabling us to relate the present to the past and to provide a wealth of illustration. Finally, the proper type of digression implies that the teacher never forgets the main program, never forgets the exact point of divergence, and after the divergence pushes the main program more zealously and more energetically than ever.

153. **Manners of students.** — The points that we have been reviewing by no means embrace all the complex responsibilities connected with managing the instructive intercourse of the recitation. A matter that must never be overlooked or minimized is the observance of correct class room practices on the part of the pupils. In speaking, each student should rise and should courteously address what he says to all who are present. He should be expected to catch the eye of most of those present. He should not lean on the desk or thrust one knee into the seat. If there were no other reason for rising to recite, the mere physical relief would be sufficient justification of the practice. But there are many reasons. The practice of standing to address an audience conforms to the instincts of courtesy and the rules of parliamentary procedure. It is more agreeable to any class to see the person who is speaking. Even more urgent is the effect on habits of thought and of speech. Those who stand in reciting are being trained in self-possession. They are acquiring alertness through keeping in mind simultaneously the subject matter and the audience and thus are having

steady experience in public speaking. Contrariwise, in classes where the students answer from their seats they usually talk solely for the teacher. A superintendent visiting a class in senior English started to take a seat in the back of the room; the woman teacher remonstrated and requested him to take a front seat. Apparently without the slightest perception of the way in which she was condemning herself, she explained, "I want you to hear what is said and the people in the back of the room can't hear those in front, who talk only for me." The observation of the superintendent verified her statement. All students remained seated and those near the front answered in monosyllables or in brief phrases that could not be heard ten feet away. How unfortunate are such practices in a class room where the attainment of self-expression should be the dominant purpose !

XXXVIII. DISCIPLINE

All correct class room practices tend to promote good discipline. In fact, successful teaching and proper discipline are as intimately related as are the warp and the woof of a web. Unless this truth is kept in mind, it might be misleading to give separate consideration to discipline. If this truth is never once lost sight of, it is wholly profitable to analyze the constituent elements of good discipline.

154. **Prevention of disorder.** — Many a community has pronounced some young man or woman as skilful in teaching but weak in discipline. Though the soundness of such a verdict is obviously open to question, undoubtedly many teachers have made remarkable general improvement by strengthening themselves in discipline. Furthermore, although very few people are able to judge skill in questioning or to criticize organization of subject matter, everybody is

able to detect and denounce certain mistakes in discipline. Accordingly, no teacher can afford to spare effort until he has successfully mastered the problem of discipline. A fundamental law of good discipline to which he must first turn his thought is prevention of trouble. In discipline an ounce of prevention is worth ten pounds of cure. The easiest and the least artificial way of preventing disorder is by careful lesson assignments and lesson planning. Whenever such an assignment has been made as really secures systematic study either at school or at home, the pupils come to class prepared to be interested not in creating disorder but in working out the main ideas of the lesson as planned. In reality, interest in subject matter of reasonable difficulty leaves little time for trouble. A pupil who through reciting well receives his share of attention has no desire to use other means of attracting attention to himself. Hence, a careful and suitable assignment is the open-sesame to ideal class room conditions. If the teacher has not only made such an assignment but has so organized his material that in the class room he is never at a loss, never hesitates, but fires good clear questions rapidly, he has greatly reduced the chances of disorder. How often indeed is bad behavior caused by the simple fact that the teacher lacks the power to push through a program with vivacity and speed.

Another mode of prevention, mechanical but useful, is early consideration of judicious seating. Judicious seating means the separation of students whose proximity to each other is mutually suggestive of a dozen outside activities and is likely to hinder the sharp focus of concentration. A mischievous youngster should not necessarily be seated in front

but should perhaps be in the back seat removed from general observation and surrounded by a barrier of serious pupils. The fact that a skilled disciplinarian can have perfect order under almost any conditions should not mislead the novice into tolerating an unfortunate plan of seating. If only changes in seating are made early with tactful and friendly explanation, the students will be glad to co-operate in the best arrangement.

Again, difficulties may be anticipated and prevented by a clear simple request made in a reasonable way. Unfortunately, some inexperienced teachers misapply the pedagogical dictum that rules are inherently harmful. Rules given as rules are indeed objectionable because they have the calamitous effect of a challenge. But in a very few simple matters a request put in a fair way may insure that the best practice and manners become habitual. For instance, we should request students not to whisper comments to their neighbors during a recitation even if the comments explain the work in hand. The two reasons are that these asides are a discourtesy to the speaker who has the floor and that the slight hissing sound of a whisper hinders concentration. In this particular both high school and college teachers are entirely too lax. Indeed, some scholars of national reputation are so much afraid of seeming arbitrary that at times the general whispering in their lecture rooms makes it difficult to follow their lectures. Some good teachers have found it wise to permit the writing of a comment for a neighbor because such writing does not disturb the class room. But even a low whisper more or less distracts the attention of every one present. Surely there is no

improper degree of formality in expecting perfect courtesy to the speaker and to his auditors.

155. **Consistency.** — Consistency is a general law of discipline that deserves the same emphasis as prevention. Uniformity in our few requirements will go far toward enabling us to secure what we desire. Conversely, spasmodic restrictions will result in confusion. What can we expect if on one day we allow certain privileges and on another day deny them ? Weakness in discipline is more often due to the inconsistency of the teacher than to any other single cause. Many a young woman teacher betrays some slight amusement at a mischievous prank. To herself she makes the absurd excuse that she has a keen sense of humor: she should instead censure herself for lack of self-control. Later when she is forced to check the originator of the prank, he cannot understand why his generous efforts to provide enlivenment and entertainment are not always successful. Or she may perhaps be severe with some imitators of the first comedian and thus she gets the damaging reputation of being an unfair respecter of persons. If it is necessary to have such a penalty as the lowering of a deportment grade, here also is consistency essential. A deduction must be uniformly proportioned to the offence. The teacher who is consistent wins a reputation for fairness and justice.

156. **Avoidance of public reproof.** — Another supreme consideration in discipline is the wise checking of any impropriety. In the control of adolescents nothing is quite so important as the avoidance of public reproof. Boys and girls sixteen years old are more sensitive than adults. If they are rebuked in class, they infer that the teacher has a malicious

desire to humiliate them. They become resentful and not infrequently try to discover an effective mode of retaliation. Indeed, the very word that they use for a reproof before the class is expressive of rancor. Everybody has heard some high school boy declare indignantly, "He hadn't any right to bawl me out!" Furthermore, the pupils who hear the reproof infer that the teacher is slightly irritated and henceforth regard him with diminished respect. There are teachers of long service who have never perceived the ruinous effect of a carping manner. A woman teacher said to a girl who was expecting to teach in a high school, "I think you're too little to be a teacher. If you're little, it's hard to have discipline. If you're little, you must make up for it by so much more storming." Even limited experience ought to be enough to convince any one that "storming" is not the way to gain authority but is the way to forfeit it.

The teacher who depends on the private interview will accomplish the desired end. If he takes note of any offence without saying a word, with a look indicative not of annoyance but of decision, he commands the respect which pupils accord to self-control. It is true that if they believe him to be inconsistent enough to drop the matter and to omit a conference with the offending student, much of the good effect on them may be lost. But unless the teacher has already proved himself inconsistent, they are disposed to view silence as more ominous than words. In a private conference it will be evident that the teacher is not hostile and that he is moved not by vexation but by a sincere desire for the interest of the work. It is needless to say that such a tête-à-tête must not be a sugary, sentimental, protracted "heart-to-

heart" talk. The sole effort must be to get at the root of the trouble in a reasonable and thoughtful manner.

157. **Co-operation.** — The final principle of good discipline, not less fundamental than prevention, consistency, and self-control, is co-operation. Ideal discipline is derived from the common aims of pupils and teacher. Students have a sympathetic unity with the teacher if they are conscious of steady development through the work. As good discipline is necessary to strong teaching, strong teaching is itself a source of good discipline. There is an unceasing interaction. There is the perfect class room atmosphere if every moment is made valuable in the intellectual growth of the students.

THE PRACTICAL matters which we have just been considering are nearly as important in teaching as scholarship or native brain power because they largely determine whether scholarship or native brain power shall be professionally useful. Individual conformity to a strict code of professional ethics will result in a mutually helpful attitude among teachers and in a higher estimate of the profession on the part of the public. Every worthy quality of character or personality is valuable in teaching. Such qualities as vitality, strong will, optimism, sympathetic imagination, and sociability are especially to be sought because they result in an immediately appreciable influence over young people. No one thing in this book is more deserving of consideration than the stress placed on mastery of subject matter by the teacher and the use of such proper methods as insure daily preparation by high school students.

If the points concerning class room form are applied with judgment and common sense, they will make no slight contribution to an atmosphere of urbanity and intellectual activity. Since the suggestions about discipline have afforded direct practical help to some young teachers in trying emergencies, they may be expected to assist other inexperienced teachers in similar circumstances. Fortunately, in many a high school discipline is smooth and easy and friction is almost inconceivable.

We must not fail to recognize that any statement of principles and methods is necessarily incomplete and may even seem fragmentary. In actual teaching a hitherto unknown, unforeseen, unexpected problem or need is forever emerging. What Holmes has said about doctors might be said with equal truth about teachers: the young teachers know the rules; the old teachers know the exceptions. The chief thing that a text on methods can do is to equip beginning teachers with the basic rules or principles. The English teacher should judge the plans and principles of this text in the light of practical experience. Moreover, he should seek in every possible way depth of scholarship and breadth of intellectual outlook. He should bear in mind that no prescription of methods, no defining of objectives, no formulation of a course can ever enable a human machine, a drudging robot, to be an effective English teacher. He should acquire the power of self-criticism. He should develop a highly sensitive teaching conscience, a conscience that rewards with relative contentment when good work has been done and that is a spur to renewal of effort. After attain-

ing general skill and mastery he should reserve a fraction of his time and energy for class room experiments, new ventures, departures from the tried and customary procedures. The coming decade is sure to see marked progress in English teaching and in such progress every teacher may have an enviable part. In the program of universal high school education, to which the American people are irretrievably committed, no other subject, not even citizenship or science, bids fair to take so large a space as will be allotted to English literature and the English language. No other subject calls so imperatively for creative and original teachers.

DO AND DON'T

1. In making an assignment speak so impressively that every one in the room will feel the urgent importance of noting all particulars.
2. **Don't postpone your assignment to the end of the period.** Assignments made at the close of the period are hurried and indefinite. **The beginning of the period is usually the right place for the assignment,** very rarely the middle.
3. On some occasion after you have acquired strong influence over a class, let them work out co-operatively an important assignment, perhaps in oral composition. They may give some valuable ideas on what they need.
4. Don't do the talking that your students should properly do.

5. Always have a watch or a clock in teaching so that you will be able to proportion the time to the different parts of your plan for the period.
6. In daily review or summaries don't constantly repeat exactly the same high points.
7. At least once a week make your aim an especially lively recitation with some response from every student. An effort of this type is a check against inertness and sluggishness in teaching.
8. Don't direct your questions toward a particular type of students. Sometimes teachers give too much attention to their favorites, sometimes to the aggressive type, sometimes to the weak pupils.
9. Give frequently an unexpected five-minute written quiz on the material assigned for the day.
10. Don't depend on memory and general impressions in grading. Keep systematic records on class response as well as on written work.
11. If you ever find it necessary to give a class suggestions that have even a faint note of adverse criticism, give them only on a day when your vitality and optimism are above par.
12. Don't wait until the end of the term or the end of the quarter to find out that a student is failing. Find out early and give an early warning. Such a warning protects you and gives a better chance to the student.
13. Have a time when you can be accessible to students who wish to make inquiries about their work. Thus any tendency to raise personal questions in class may be obviated.

14. Don't let students divert you from your program by asking questions connected with your hobbies.
15. Give Saturday morning to lesson plans for the coming week. You will be repaid by the satisfaction that superior teaching brings.
16. Don't be what some superintendents call a "weak-end" teacher, a teacher that leaves town every week end and is consequently weak in community influence.
17. Enter with enthusiasm into the extra-curricular activities but remember that they are side shows and that English teaching should be the main show.
18. In imitating a good teacher don't imitate mere mannerisms. One should not be like the monkey that having learned to open a trunk, made preliminary useless circles in the air because an old lady who had defective eyesight used that method of locating the key hole.
19. Try to brighten your work by visual aids at least as often as once in two weeks.
20. Don't correct faulty blackboard work which the writers should correct. A teacher lately spent the period changing the incorrect blackboard scansion of a class while the class listlessly watched her at work.

PROJECTS FOR STUDY

1. Report from your own observation of schools and teachers some form of unprofessionalism not mentioned in the brief discussion included in this chapter.
2. Call to mind the most successful English teacher that you have observed and report what qualities of personality, aside

from those discussed in this chapter and aside from native brain power and scholarship, are factors in the person's success.

3. Rank in the order of importance the definite suggestions given in this chapter for securing careful daily preparation by high school students.
4. From the reading of this chapter can you name five or six definite practices that you would observe if you were to visit the class room of a high school English teacher ?
5. Mention one or two recommendations in this chapter which are connected with the general educational theory of individual differences.
6. In the list, "Do and Don't," on the page preceding, several suggestions have been blackfaced to suggest their practical importance. What suggestion do you regard as more important than those blackfaced ?

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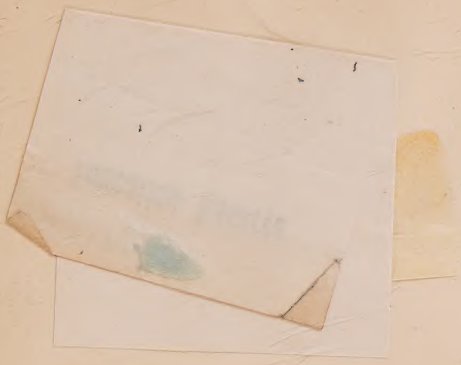

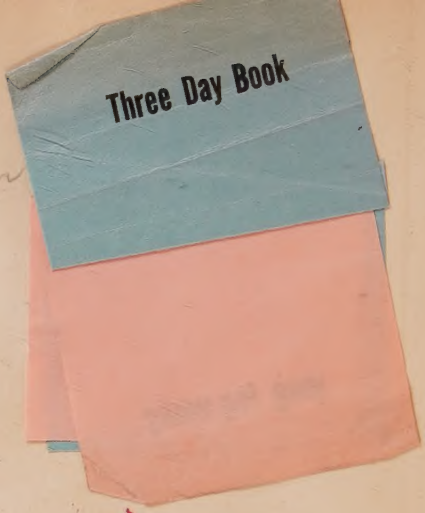
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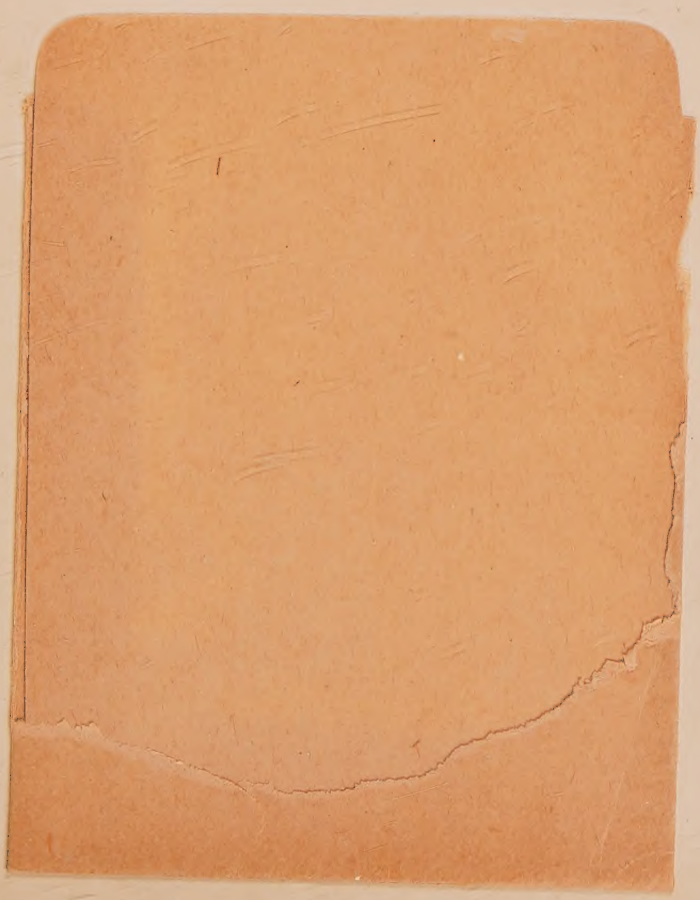
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